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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

MANUFACTURED ANTAGONISMS: ACADEME'S PORTRAYAL OF QUEBEC-ALBERTA INTERESTS, 1930-1960.

BY

BRIAN HUMPHREYS

(C)

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 1991

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for the acceptance, a thesis entitled Manufactured Antagonisms: Academe's Portrayal of Quebec-Alberta Interests, 1930-1960 submitted by Brian Humphreys in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Dr. Ian Urquhart

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Abstract

This paper examines the impression established by English-speaking academics that Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional interests have been historically at fundamental odds. It focusses on the period of 1930 to 1960. Two central arguments are made. First, this traditional portrait of Alberta-Quebec antagonism is erroneous. Second, the inaccuracy of this impression may be understood by way of a political bias which inspired the work of academics during this period.

Scholars reported that Alberta and Quebec have followed two contrasting conceptions of federalism. Apart from the years 1935 to 1942, Alberta was portrayed as having succumbed to the centralist ambitions of the federal government. Quebec was described as having rejected this agenda. It struggled to maintain the integrity of its jurisdictional powers in the face of Ottawa's actions. However, the account of Alberta's interests does not rest on strong empirical foundation. While the activity of Quebec received serious academic attention, Alberta's behaviour was neglected. This neglect warrants a re-examination of Alberta's jurisdictional positions during this period and a comparison of those positions to Quebec's. Such an examination reveals that Alberta and Quebec's jurisdictional ambitions were congruous, not antagonistic. Both governments demonstrated a consistent desire to secure their jurisdictional prerogatives from federal government takeover or intrusion.

These findings beg two questions: What explains academe's failure to investigate the interests of Alberta? And, given this neglect, what explains the tendency of scholars to conclude that Alberta followed a centralist model? Both questions may be answered by way of a centralist bias that inspired the work of scholars during this era. Academics held a deep, moral attachment to the prospect of a centralized federation. They emphasized an aspect of the political landscape (real or imagined) which stood to further their cause - namely, an English-Canadian cultural homogeneity under which provincial government interests were subsumed - and avoided serious consideration of challenges to that cause - such as, the decentralist actions of provincial governments within the English Canadian framework. As a result, English-speaking academics manufactured the impression of an interprovincial conflict which did not in fact exist.

Acknowledgment

Four years ago I was on the verge of completing my undergraduate thesis at Carleton University. My supervisor at that time, Professor Alain Gagnon (a superb teacher and a very influencial person on my short academic life) stressed that in my future scholastic endeavours I should be careful to select instructors that are not only very apt in their fields of study, but who are also personable - people whose company I would enjoy. Having taken this advice seriously, it is no simple coincidence that I asked Professor Ian Urquhart to oversee this project. Dr. Urquhart has taught me two skills (among many) which will prove invaluable in whatever I choose to do in the future. First, at his insistence I have learned to think outside of conventional parameters - to seriously question the literature I read and the political activity I observe. Second, by way of his own conduct he has instilled in me the importance of learning how to teach others what knowledge I may be fortunate enough to gain. When reading Sandra Djwa's biography on F.R. Scott for this project, I came across a passage describing an incident between Scott and a student studying under him. It could have easily been written about Professor Urquhart. The passage reads as follows:

> Scott ... encouraged Lapointe [his student] to write a thesis on the Quebec labour unions, about which almost nothing had been written .... At the end of his first year of study, Lapointe had exhausted all references Scott had given him, yet the topic had not been covered. He went to Scott's office and said, " 'I have read everything that you have given me, Frank. I have nothing more to read and I still have a lot of queries'." "'Good! Good!', he said, ' because I have news for you. There's nothing else to read and you've got now to find the answers to those queries that you discovered.' He said, 'I can't help you any more. From now on you will be teaching me'."

While I do not pretend to have taught Ian a great deal, he made a concerted effort to convince me that I am capable of doing so. I thank him for his compassion, patience, and tireless efforts of my behalf. I fear that it is rather wishful to think that I may come across another educator of his caliber in the future. Additionally, I thank Dr. Alan Shandro for acting as a second sounding board near the completion of my study. His gentle steering was appreciated, and his genuine interest in my topic was flattering. I would also like to express my gratitude to Alice Lau. I, as well as my peers in political science, would not have discovered many of the sources we needed for our topics of study if it were not for Alice's caring assistance in our department's library. And finally (though not least in importance) I wish to thank two dear friends - Myra Campbell and Bill Shields. During the writing of this thesis I experienced a personal tragedy. At times it was difficult to move forward in my research. Without their support and understanding this thesis would not have been completed. This work is dedicated to them.

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Introduction

Accounts by English-speaking academics of the jurisdictional interests of the Quebec and Alberta governments between 1930 and 1960 intimate that those interests were at odds. Each government was portrayed as having accepted a conception of federalism that conflicted with the other's. On the one hand, prominent scholars such as J.A. Corry, Frank Scott, and Donald Smiley, described Alberta's interests as being subsumed under the objectives of a homogeneous English-speaking community - a community which viewed the federal government as the primary vehicle for realizing its political aspirations. Consequently, Alberta became understood to submit to a centralized model of decision making in Canada. Quebec, on the other hand, was held to reject this approach. Preoccupied with maintaining the cultural integrity of its majority French-speaking population, the Quebec government struggled to secure its political prerogatives from Ottawa.

I contend that this traditional portrait of the relationship between Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional aspirations is inaccurate. Further, I suggest that this inaccuracy may be understood by way of a political bias which animated the work of English-speaking academics during this period. In an engaged effort to advance the establishment of a strong central government, scholars manufactured a political condition in Canada to reinforce the logic of their ambition. This condition was the existence of a politically homogeneous English Canadian community to which Alberta's interests were attached. In actuality, both this condition and the accompanying antagonism between Quebec and Alberta's conceptions of federalism did not exist. Alberta rejected the centralization model. Like Quebec, it acted consistently to secure its independent decision making prerogatives from Ottawa.

Before outlining how this argument is constructed, it is important to address briefly two questions: Why is a comparative assessment of Quebec-Alberta ambitions a noteworthy topic for study? Why focus on the period from 1930 to 1960?

Contemporary Understandings of Quebec-Alberta Interests: A Reason to Survey History

Popular impressions of the current relationship between Quebec and Alberta's political ambitions suggest that each government holds the other's positions in disregard. Professor Barry Cooper, for instance, makes the very strong assertion that:

> There is nothing personal in this. Westerners are not anti-Quebecker any more than Quebeckers are anti-westerner .... Neither of us is a bigot; we just share a tendency to call a spade a spade. Neither of us is too timid to stand up for his [/her] interests. Unfortunately, our interests within confederation are at odds (1990: 23).

While it is not apparent exactly what Cooper means by "westerner" or "Quebecker," other scholars apply his sentiments directly to the Alberta and Quebec governments.

Gibbins (1980: 176), for example, maintains that Alberta has consistently taken a hostile view of Quebec's general preoccupation with securing and augmenting its broad range of provincial powers. Such a view stems primarily from Alberta's belief that Quebec's position is intended to further the autonomy of its French-speaking society from the rest of Canada. This purpose is held to be incongruous with Alberta's interest in advancing a single, country-wide identity. Treating western alienation as a sentiment that is held by both prairie governments and the prairie public (1980: 167), Gibbins writes,

> Antipathy towards Quebec and French Canadians is a long-standing pillar of western alienation .... The taproot of this hostility goes back to problems western Canada faced in assimilating a large and polygot immigrant population. Special rights or protection for French Canadians were irksome .... [A] nationalism ... emerged in western Canada [that] was close in spirit to the melting-pot nationalism of the United States, and it found itself in direct conflict with the desire of French Canadians to shelter their own ethnicity behind special legal and political rights (1976: 176-177).[1]

Further, Elton asserts that Quebec's cultural agenda has monopolized the attention of the federal government at the expense of Alberta's chief area of focus - namely, economic matters (1979: 123). Unfortunately, Elton does not elaborate on how Quebec's culturally-based jurisdictional ambitions conflict with Alberta's economic concerns.[2]

For two reasons however, it is difficult to determine how these political scientists arrive at their assertions. First, there are few studies currently available on comparative provincial government policy in Canada from which they may draw their interpretation. Second, observations by government participants since the 1960s seriously contradict any notion of an overriding conflict between Quebec and Alberta's interests.

As Donald Rowat first noticed in the early 1970s, "the area of provincial government can be described as 'the dark continent' of Canadian political science. The area has been so badly neglected that no book has yet been written on the government of British Columbia and none in English on Quebec, to say nothing of a general comparative book on provincial government" (1972: 5). While a few general texts have since been written on provincial politics (i.e. Rowat, 1972; Bellamy et al., 1976; and Dyck, 1986) none study provincial government interests in a comparative fashion. As Chandler and Chandler comment, "understanding of provincial policy has depended almost exclusively on a wide variety of case studies. Many of these works ... have remained isolated pieces of research on an otherwise unexplored terrain" (1979: Preface). Unfortunately, Chandler and Chandler's subsequent work on provincial public policy fails to compare the political interests of individual provincial governments to one another.

When one incorporates the observations of provincial government participants into this discussion, it becomes all the more puzzling as to how Cooper, Gibbins, and Elton maintain their accounts of Quebec-Alberta hostility.[3] According to these participants, Alberta and Quebec have maintained a political alliance with regard to one general interest since at least the 1960s. Both governments have been particularly interested in maintaining their jurisdictional prerogatives from federal

government interference, and both have sought to increase those capacities. Regardless of the particular motives behind wanting to secure these powers, and in spite of the fact that provinces may not share a tendency to view all powers with the same degree of importance, each government views the other as an additional, or complementary, force in a more general jurisdictional battle with Ottawa. McWhinney, for instance, comments that since the 1960s the jurisdictional interests of Alberta (and all other English-speaking provinces) and Quebec have been harmonious. Both have shared a similar ambition to stop federal government aggrandizement and to secure increased control over their provincial prerogatives. While, on the one hand, Quebec has focussed upon a devolution of powers in both the economic and cultural fields, and on the other, Alberta has given primary attention to securing and augmenting its economic capacities alone, both provinces have supported each other in their endeavours (1979: 94). Romanow, Whyte and Leeson reinforce McWhinney's observations when accounting for events during the 1976-1981 constitutional negotiations (1984: xvi-xix). Alberta was prepared to endorse Quebec's wider economic and cultural agenda because it complemented Alberta's particular desire to enhance provincial resource rights. Moreover, journalists Sheppard and Valpy observed that Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed struck the closest friendship of any of the premiers with Quebec's Rene Levesque, whom he considered to be "a strong provincialist like himself" (1982:8). Finally, reflecting upon the possible failure of the Meech Lake Accord in March of 1990, Alberta Deputy Premier Jim Horsman said:

> I am not predicting that Quebec will separate from Canada, and I pray to god that it doesn't happen - for if it does, Alberta will lose its best ally at the constitutional table. Alberta and Quebec have long been the strongest defenders of provincial rights. It was Quebec who allied with Alberta in opposing the National Energy Program .... It was Quebec who supported Alberta on our position with respect to resource ownership leading up to the constitutional amendments of 1982 ... It is Quebec who supports Alberta in preventing federal intrusion into areas of provincial jurisdiction. With Quebec separated from Canada - or even absent from the constitutional table - it would be extremely difficult to improve our federal system, and more than likely, we would see this system degenerate (1990: 7-8).

Given these findings, how might one understand the perception that Alberta and Quebec's overall interests are at odds? It seems plausible that this interpretation is more historical than contemporay. In other words, perhaps this Quebec-Alberta political alliance is simply a recent phenomenon. Perhaps Cooper, Gibbins, and Elton are referring to a longer, more historical trend between Quebec and Alberta's political interests. While there are no comparative academic works available to support the credibility of such an impression, there are no participant accounts on record to deny it. In short, to pursue an understanding of why Quebec-Alberta interests are portrayed in an antagonistic manner necessitates a more historical overview of their behaviour.

In order to investigate this matter, one must first attempt to locate when exactly the contemporary alliance developed. Among the participant accounts, McWhinney's locates the alliance the furthest back in time - that being, the 1960s.

This date however, is quite general. I propose that a more specific date may be found by way of information provided by students of province-building. Introduced by Black and Cairns (1966), the study of province-building represented Canadian academe's first attempt to assess provincial government behaviour outside of Quebec. Black and Cairns observed that in the 1960s, provinces were vying for increased jurisdictional powers, enhancing their bureaucratic capacities, seeking greater political allegiances from populations within their borders, and developing economies independent of the rest of Canada (1966: 27-42). Chandler and Chandler have since attempted to locate when exactly this behaviour began. They determine that province-building first became practiced by governments in 1960 (1979: 162-163). According to Chandler and Chandler, the inception of the Lesage government in Quebec represented the first concerted provincial effort to challenge Ottawa's "march toward centralization" (1979: 162). While Quebec's reason for this challenge stemmed from its unique desire to protect francophone cultural integrity, other provinces immediately allied with Quebec in a common desire to enhance their independent taxing capacities and to rid their policy areas of federal influence from federal conditional funding (1979: 163). It is important to establish that, in and of itself, the province-building concept does not directly reinforce the findings of McWhinney and other provincial government participants. It does not compare provincial government interests. Nevertheless, its empirical reference to a general provincial government desire to increase jurisdictional capacities, would seem to invite an examination of the contemporary Quebec-Alberta alliance described by these participants.[4] In doing so, I suggest that the observation provided by Chandler and Chandler - namely, that province-building began in 1960 - serves to locate more precisely than McWhinney the time at which the suggested Quebec-Alberta alliance began to develop. Therefore, to pursue the popular notion of hostility between Quebec and Alberta's interests, it would seem reasonable to study the relationship prior to this date.

I choose to focus specifically on the two provinces' jurisdictional concerns. While this will not allow generalizations to be made on the entire scope of Quebec and Alberta's political ambitions, it will permit this paper to test the proposition that overall ambitions have been at odds. Given this emphasis on legal prerogatives, the year 1930 represents a good starting point for the survey because it is the date at which Alberta obtained full provincial status through its acquisition of resource rights. It seems reasonable to compare these provinces' jurisdictional concerns when both have the same prerogatives to manage.

In short, the perception that a strong antagonism exists between the overall interests of Quebec and Alberta invites examination. Canadian academe has failed to pursue the subject of comparative provincial government behaviour which would be needed to deny or confirm this perception. As well, government participants report that an overriding hostility between these two provinces' interests does not appear in recent years. Both governments currently share a common concern for protecting their legislative capacities from the central government, and they have formed a political alliance to this end. While province-building does not provide direct evidence to support participant accounts, it does suggest that grounds for this alliance may have been present as far back as 1960. Therefore, to pursue an understanding of the impression of Quebec-Alberta antagonism, one must investigate events prior to that year.[5]

The Path of Investigation

To approach an understanding of the hostility reported between Quebec and Alberta's interests, I begin with an overview of the English-speaking academic literature written on the political ambitions of governments between 1930 and 1960. This overview is found in the first chapter. Two questions are addressed. First, how were these interests portrayed? And second, are there grounds to question this interpretation? As mentioned at the outset, Quebec and Alberta were described as holding two contrasting conceptions of federalism. Quebec adhered to an autonomist position out of a desire to protect the cultural integrity of its predominantly francophone population. Remaining provinces, on the other hand, were held to abide by the interests of a homogeneous English Canadian community which viewed Ottawa as the primary representative of its ambitions. Consequently, Alberta's interests became associated with those of the centralist-minded federal government.

There is one fundamental aspect to this academic overview however, which warrants a re-evaluation of historical events - namely, conclusions reached about the interests of English-speaking provincial governments were not based upon a strong empirical foundation. The homogeneity of English-speaking provincial government interests was purported but it was done without a detailed, comparative assessment of the eight or nine provinces that would have been necessary to substantiate this finding. Consequently, the study moves to an evaluation and comparison of Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional interests during this period.

This evaluation is found in chapters Two and Three. My primary sources of data are the submissions to, and discourse at, all Dominion (/federal)-provincial conferences from 1930 to 1960. These conferences provide reliable accounts of each province's policy direction. As well, it allows one to discover how each province viewed the other's positions. As Simeon notes, not only is the federal-provincial conference "the chief arena within which executive governments deal with each other," but the fact that our political institutions concentrate vast discretionary powers within the hands of those attending these meetings ensures that positions articulated may be considered firm policy commitments (1972: 142-143).

These chapters argue that between 1930 and 1960 Alberta and Quebec held similar jurisdictional concerns. Apart from their desire to relinquish unemployment and pension responsibilities during the Depression, both demonstrated a consistent determination to defend and augment their independent legal powers. Therefore, in contrast to what scholars reported, Alberta did not submit to a centralization of powers at Ottawa. Like Quebec, it resisted this trend. Alberta and Quebec's political interests were complementary, not antagonistic.

At this point the study could pursue one of two questions: What explains the similarity between Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional concerns during this period? Or, how may one understand academe's failure to identify this similarity between Quebec and Alberta's concerns? I choose to investigate the latter query. I do so for the following reason: In order to account for the similarity between Quebec and Alberta's interests, one must first have knowledge that their interests are indeed compatible. Up to this point, such knowledge has been missing from Canadian political science. I therefore suggest that accounting for why knowledge of similarity

between Quebec and Alberta's interests has been absent until now should precede an explanation of why those interests are similar.

In Chapter Four, I propose this failure to account for Quebec and Alberta's compatible jurisdictional ambitions should be explained in terms of an academic bias in favour of a centralized federation which scholars allowed to influence the focus of their work. In essence, scholars emphasized an aspect of the Canadian political landscape (real or imagined) which stood to further the cause of centralization - namely, English Canadian cultural homogeneity - and avoided serious consideration of challenges to that cause, such as, the decentralist actions of provincial governments within the English Canadian framework.

This explanation develops from studying the biographies and memoirs of predominant English-speaking scholars who wrote extensively on government interests during this period. In such an exercise I can discover whether these academics either acknowledge, or are cited as, having brought a bias to their work of the type I suspect. I focus on three scholars in particular - those being, J.A. Corry, F.R. Scott, and Donald Smiley. Together, these three figures provide an abundance of seminal material on government behaviour during the 1930-1960 period. As well, I conduct a survey of literature written on the political propensites of the entire social science community at this time.

I find that these three intellectuals (in step with the social science community as a whole) were indeed morally attached to the prospect of a centralized federation. Essentially, they considered themselves to be nation-builders. They openly acknowledge, or are documented as, having fused together their desire for how the federation ought to develop with how it was in fact developing. For decision making to become more centred in Ottawa, a strong English Canadian sense of common identity and purpose was deemed essential. Much to their concern however, such a condition was missing. They believed it was their responsibilty, as well as the federal government's, to develop this condition. Therefore, the assertion in their writings that a homogeneous English Canadian conception of federalism existed was not so much an observation as it was a prescription. Related to this prescription was a tendency to view English-speaking provinces with disdain, and unworthy of serious attention. While recognizing that some of these provinces were articulating interests contrary to their objective, and while even holding that such interests were innate at this level of government, the depth of commitment to the nation-building objective led them to focus their attention on the activities of Ottawa. The desire for English-speaking political homogeneity overrode the reality of events.

Given their inclination to view political interests in cultural terms, however, scholars gave importance to the Quebec government's opposition to centralization. Further, by way of the fact that an English-Canadian cultural identity had not yet developed to their satisfaction, these academics also expressed an admiration for Quebec's sense of nation and common purpose. Accordingly, it was established that in the quest for centralized decision making in Canada, Quebec was the only province whose dissenting interests warranted attention.

In sum, the bias running through English-speaking academe's presentation of the Canadian political environment from 1930 to 1960 is responsible for the appearance that the interests of Alberta and Quebec were at odds. In their bid to further a condition they deemed essential to their nation-building cause, scholars did not give sufficient attention to Alberta's conduct. In doing so, they manufactured an impression of interprovincial conflict which, in reality, did not exist.

In my conclusion I discuss briefly how this past bias within academe has affected our more contemporary interpretation of Canadian politics. As well, I search for new biases which have diminished our ability to fully absorb the political realities around us at present. A disturbing circle appears. The biases we develop by becoming actively engaged in political problems has weakened our ability to provide solutions to those problems. Consequently, I argue that greater attention should be paid to the presence of political bias in academe than is currently the case.

Notes

1 Gibbins does not seem to differentiate between the interests of the Quebec state and those of French Canadians.

2 While Elton, Gibbins, and Cooper each suggest that Quebec and Alberta's overall political aspirations are at odds, they provide only the examples of cultural and linguistic matters to illustrate their arguments.

3 One notable difference between participant observations and those of Cooper, Gibbins and Elton is that the former group focusses exclusively on the opinions of governments while the latter does not differentiate between the opinions of governments and those of the public.

4 Province-building observations do not establish that all provincial governments have pursued the same province-building objectives, nor do they confirm that all provinces act on these objectives with the same degree of intensity. Special attention on both of these matters is given to Quebec. Cairns, for instance (1977: 708-711), holds that Quebec's cultural attributes have led this province to pursue increased jurisdiction over a wider range of policies than the other provinces. As well, it has done so with "a special passion" (1977: 709). Concurring with such an assertion, Evenson and Simeon (1979: 186) believe that Quebec should be divided-out as a more thorough province-builder than its counterparts. Of course, varying degrees of intensity exist between the remaining provinces as well. Alberta, for instance, pursued the devolution of resource rights with greater resolve than other provinces during the constitutional negotiations between 1976 and 1981 (Romanow et al., 1984: xvi-xix). Regardless of the potential for variations in specific province-building objectives and intensities however, the study of this topic does establish grounds for questioning assertions that the interests of Alberta and Quebec are at inherent odds. Alternatively, it invites an exploration of the extent to which interests are similar or antagonistic. Any possible similarity between the two governments' concerns would stand in important contrast to the absolute differences described by political commentators such as Cooper.

5 As a final comment on province-building, it is important to briefly elaborate on its failure to explore provincial government interests in a comparative manner. As mentioned, at its point of discovery, province-building seems to invite such comparisons. This invitation however, extends beyond the contemporary. As Young, Faucher, and Blais point out (1984), students of province-building have failed to appreciate that the activity they describe may not have been born in the 1960s. They argue that "inadequate account is taken of pre-1960 events: discontinuity is often described where none exists, and recent change in magnified" (1984: 786). Unfortunately, these three critics do not pursue their point. They do not provide a detailed historical survey of their own to fill this potential void. Therefore, in addition to academe's overall neglect to study comparative provincial government behaviour, the discussion of the province-building concept gives further impetus for conducting a comparative survey of provincial government interests.

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1. Quebec-Alberta Interests: The Conventional Comparison

Introduction

Between 1930 and 1960, Canadian academe presented Quebec and Alberta's political aspirations as fundamentally at odds. Alberta's acceptance of an overall English Canadian commitment to further the establishment of a strong central government, stood in contrast to Quebec's desire to protect its French-speaking cultural integrity through enhanced provincial autonomy. In essence, each considered its political role in the federal exercise to be different. Alberta, apart from the Social Credit administration's platform in the 1930s, is reported to have conducted itself as a support mechanism for national objectives - objectives which it accepted as best executed by Ottawa. Quebec, on the other hand, assumed a unique set of governmental interests. Rather than acquiesce to the principle of maintaining and enhancing the federal government's capacities, it sought to secure the strength of its own prerogatives.

A close examination of this traditional account, however, leaves its thoroughness in question. Scholars did not perform a comprehensive investigation of English-speaking provincial government behaviour - an investigation which would have been needed to fully confirm that provinces such as Alberta consistently followed the political lead of Ottawa, or were in conflict with Quebec. The chapter will be divided into two segments. First, an overview of the conventional wisdom is provided.[1] Second, the case for re-examining this record of events is made.

Acquiescence versus Opposition to Centralization

The study of government behaviour in Canada during this period began from the premise that the interests of governments, both federal and provincial, were largely determined by two contrasting views of the original Confederation exercise. Each view corresponded to what were loosely referred to as the English- and French-speaking cultures within the federation's framework (Simeon, 1988: S10). Donald Smiley (1965) applied formal titles to these conceptions - those being, a "pan-Canadian" model adhered to by the English-speaking community, and a "dualist" perspective endorsed by those of French-speaking origin.

The pan-Canadian conception of federalism was derived from a wide array of sources within the English-speaking community. These sources ranged from prominent individuals (Smiley, 1965: 89) to a plethora of "different sections and groups," which included, "numbers of organized movements and associations, from political parties to learned societies [and] from chambers of commerce to athletic clubs" (Scott, 1939: 86). Together they shared the opinion that Confederation was a project intended to establish a strong economic union, a country-wide equality of condition, and a single Canadian cultural identity (Smiley, 1965: 88-93). To accomplish this objective, they believed it was necessary to develop a centralized decision making structure in the polity. Ottawa, by way of its unique jurisdiction over this culturally and politically homogeneous community was the point around which this structure would revolve. Essentially, "English Canadians in the main

agreed that the purpose of this community should be advanced through the federal government" (Smiley, 1965: 88). Consequently, little significant provincial government influence over country-wide policy making was expected. According to Smiley,

> "[there was] a consensus in English-speaking Canada that Ottawa [had] the moral obligation to involve itself in any matter deemed to be a great importance and to require public action, including matters within the legislative jurisdiction of the provinces [and] .... so far as I can discover, no influential person or group outside of Quebec has challenged the appropriateness of federal action in this direction. (Smiley, 1965: 85-86).

Given these popular sentiments, English-speaking provincial governments were held to submit to the interests of the central government. Once again, in Smiley's words:

> ... provincial leaders - those outside Quebec of course - ... sensed the impracticability of mounting an effective defence against [centralization]. The dominant mood in English-speaking Canada appeared to be that federal judgement and federal initiative were somehow inherently more legitimate than those of the provinces and on this basis a confrontation with the central authorities might well be resolved by the public in the latter's favour. (1967: 52).

This acceptance of the federal government political lead, however, was not simply a matter of provincial surrender to the wishes of the anglophone community at large. As Corry argues, there was also an element of common sense to the provinces' position (1958: 96). The Depression made it apparent to these authorities that they were not able to fulfil their responsibilities without the assistance of federal government financial capacities. Additionally, they realized that there was a world-wide trend toward financial and technical interdependence to which they would have to succumb. Therefore, from the Depression forward anglophone provinces became resigned to the prospect of federal dominance over key social and economic decision making in Canada (Corry, 1958: 96). According to Corry, the Report of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations (the Rowell-Sirois Report), published in 1939, represented a succinct summarization of this centralization trend.

> The tides are running strongly against provincial autonomy. The integrated economy, under the conditions of large scale industrialism and extensive government intervention in economic and social matters strains toward political centralization. Those who find this unconvincing should ponder the significance of certain features of Canadian politics in the last ten years.... Provincial leaders displayed greater interest in federal affairs than ever before. Pressures were brought to get Ottawa to act for the benefit of particular provinces and to prevent Ottawa acting to the prejudice of others ...[and] the only adequate explanation [for this] is that provincial affairs are now so entangled with federal

> affairs that provincial leaders cannot keep them in separate compartments.... The responsibilities which the Constitution imposes on the provinces can no longer be met fully at [provincial capitals]. It is no longer possible to conceal the fact that control over provincial destinies is centralizing in Ottawa (1941: 158-159).

During the Second World War, "provinces other than Quebec were ... [further] habituated" to follow the federal government lead (Smiley, 1967: 51), and this bent continued after the War ended. Consistent with the federal government's Reconstruction proposals, all English-speaking provinces agreed to transfer significant areas of tax collection to the central authority in exchange for guaranteed annual rental payments from Ottawa (Corry, 1958: 104). This was held to demonstrate their overall commitment to "transactions with strongly centralizing effect, increasing the leverage of the national government on the policies of provincial governments as well as the economy of the country" (Corry, 1958: 103). As well, it was argued that Anglophone provinces were amenable to an expansion of federally-initiated conditional spending in areas of provincial jurisdiction. In fact, it was at provincial insistence that Ottawa became more aggressive in the domination of their jurisdictional spheres.

> The [English-speaking] provincial premiers do not stop at the point of encouraging new direct federal expenditures. Each goes on to urge, in addition, that the Dominion proposals for compensating the provinces for giving up these tax sources are quite inadequate, that Dominion grants to the provinces should be greatly increased. In effect, the provincial governments, Quebec excepted, are doing all they can to ensure that the Dominion will continue its dominant role in public finance and fiscal manipulation, and that genuine provincial initiative will be correspondingly curtailed (Corry, 1958: 104).

In the end, Corry predicted that provinces would ultimately amount to agents of "minor adventure" (1958: 108) and would be destined "to sink to the subordinate position" in relation to Ottawa (1958: 114). Smiley, however, noted that between the middle of the 1950's and the beginning of Quebec's Quiet Revolution, English-speaking provincial governments became less submissive to Ottawa's dominance. Sounding similar to students of province-building, Smiley comments,

> [F]rom about the middle of the 1950s .. the provincial authorites [became] more restive under the centralized fiscal regime which had evolved during the war and had been perpetuated afterward. The provincial public services came increasingly to attract well trained and aggressive officials less disposed than their predecessors to acquiesce in federal dominance (1967: 54).

Accounting specifically for Alberta's behaviour throughout this period proves difficult. For the most part, scholars tended to treat the behaviour of English-speaking provincial governments in a collective manner. Specific references to Alberta government conduct appear to have circled around the agenda of the Aberhart Social Credit administration from 1935 to 1942. Mallory (1954), Irving

(1959), and MacPherson (1953) all conducted studies on this period of Alberta government. Irving and MacPherson however, dealt primarily with Social Credit philosophy and electoral performance. Little was written by these two authors on the administration's relationship with other governments. Mallory, however, addressed Alberta's conduct in relation to Ottawa. Attention was paid to the Aberhart administration's challenge to federal government dominance. Two episodes of such challenge were highlighted - those being, Alberta's attempts to pass interventionist legislation in areas of federal jurisdiction (1954: chap. 9), and its opposition to the centralist recommendations of the Rowell-Sirois Commission (1954: 140-152). Such behaviour however, was considered representative of a rogue government. In essence, the Aberhart platform was an abnormal form of English Canadian provincial government behaviour. As Scott contended, it was merely symptomatic of the extenuating social and economic chaos caused by the Depression (1939: 86-87). Further, according to Mallory, Aberhart's policies actually contributed to Ottawa's centralization intentions. They tested the limits of provincial powers only to discover that Ottawa's jurisdiction reigned supreme. Encouraged by these results, the federal government intensified its centralization efforts (1954: chap. 10). From the early 1940s onwards, very little note was taken of Alberta's behaviour in particular. It was treated as having settled back into being a component part of an overall English-speaking provincial government propensity to follow Ottawa's political lead. As S.D. Clark wrote,

> An examination of developments in Alberta from 1935 to 1942 indicates very clearly that Aberhart's attempts to introduce Social Credit were directed primarily towards the object of strengthening the political position of the province in its relations with the federal government .... [However, these] ... developments ... were but an episode ... in a long, unfolding story of Dominion-provincial relations .... With the cessation of the Second World War ... conservatism developed as a dominant characteristic of the Social Credit movement .... [There was a] disappearance of any strongly felt need to secure the increased economic and political independence of the Alberta community (1954: viii-ix).

The dualist notion of federalism adhered to by Quebec stands in contrast to the pan-Canadian approach accepted by Alberta (Smiley, 1965).[2] This model viewed Confederation as a compact between English- and French-speaking cultures - the former primarily represented by the federal authority in Ottawa, and the latter by the National Assembly in Quebec City (Smiley, 1965). The federal form of government was originally agreed to by Quebec because it provided an assurance of self-determination for the French Canadian populace within its boundaries. Quebec received jurisdiction over those matters which, at the time, seemed most important for the preservation of the French-Canadian culture - namely, civil law, education, and religion (Cook, 1966: 44). In essence, Confederation promised an important element of local, decentralized government control of Quebec's distinct society.

> In Quebec, a major selling point of the 1867 constitutional arrangement was that, for the first time in Canadian history, it transferred a degree of political sovereignty to Quebec's French majority. Lower Canada ...

> would be freed from the shackles of its union to Upper Canada and granted autonomy, which could be used to safeguard the French-Canadian distinctiveness in a loose and decentralized political system. This point was crucial, Quebec was to have, for the first time in its history, a measure of self-government (Gagnon and Montcalm, 1990: 135-136).

Therefore, in contrast to the English Canadian view of Ottawa housing some superior, or overarching, level of government, Quebec pictured a federation formed from a need to accommodate the cultural integrity of two equal communities, each with a primary government. In essence, "French Canadians and English Canadians decided to go along with the new regime but for motives which were different, if not, to some extent, contradictory" (Morin, 1977: 36). Emphasis was placed by the Quebec government on the need to oppose a centralizing trend that was accepted by governments in English Canada (Smiley, 1965: 80, 87). The most articulate expression of Quebec's historical opposition to the centralist theme was found in the Quebec government's Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Constitutional Problems (the Tremblay Report), published in 1956 (Smiley, 1965: 80). The Report argued,

> By reason of history, as well as of the cultural character of its population, Quebec is not a province like the others, whatever might be said to the contrary. It speaks in the name of one of the two ethnic groups which founded Confederation, as one of the two partners who officially have the right to live and expand in this country. It is the only one able to represent one of these two partners, just as it alone may determine its reasons for refusing federal largesse (vol. 1: 182).

The Report continues to read,

> Little wonder, then, that Quebec sees with an anxious eye every federal intervention in fields which touch very closely upon national life of its French Canadian population .... To ensure its life, it has need of the full measure of autonomy and sovereignty which the federal compact guaranteed to it (vol. 2: 185).

During the Depression, a growing disenchantment in Quebec toward the federal system was observed with particular concern by English-speaking scholars. Poor economic conditions and the growing awareness of English Canadian capital's domination of Quebec society, intensified Quebec's traditional preoccupation with provincial autonomy (Scott, 1936: 30-31). In contrast to his assessment of the Alberta Social Credit administration, Scott viewed the ambitions of the rising Duplessis-Gouin alliance in Quebec as a serious threat to federal unity. The latent Quebec desire for outright autonomy from Canada was maturing beyond "the stage of being [a] secret aspiration and parlor revolution" (Scott, 1936: 29). Predicting (correctly) that this group would ascend to office, Scott warned that Duplessis and Gouin "intend to get what they can. All centralization of power at Ottawa is to be fought. Provincial rights are to be extended rather than curtailed" (1936: 29). It was apparent to Scott that, in order to placate Quebec's growing hostility toward

the rest of the federation, English Canadians would have to recognize the legitimacy of Quebec's concerns: "If they are met with sympathy, understanding, and reasonable concessions, French Canadians may be satisfied with something less than a break-up of the Dominion. Ideas like this do not spring from mere cussedness, but from a frustrated desire for self-expression" (1936: 30)

Given Quebec's historical outlook, the recommendations of the Rowell-Sirois Report were unacceptable. Quebec did not recognize the Royal Commission's legitimacy, nor would it entertain the idea of relinquishing any of its powers to Ottawa (Black, 1975: 182). Quebec continued its "completely consistent position" (Corry, 1958: 103) with regard to the federal government's Reconstruction proposals. Agreeing to transfer provincial taxing powers to the federal government in return for grants was equated with surrendering its legislative autonomy to Ottawa (Corry, 1958: 103). And, from the Second World War onwards Quebec continued its unique position. In contrast to its provincial counterparts, it refused to participate in the tax rental agreements, federal cost shared programmes, and grants to universities - all of which would otherwise have marked increased federal influence within its boundaries. In Corry's words,

> Since 1945 Premier Duplessis has refused to enter into a tax agreement with the national government. He does not want grants from Ottawa. He does not want Ottawa to assume the burdens for purposes that lie within the scope of provincial legislative power .... All he wants of the national government is that it should get out of his way, allow him effective freedom to ... carry the costs of whatever services ... [he] decides Quebec is to have. He wants to go it alone, and so far he is prepared to take the risks and pay the price for provincial autonomy .... [In contrast], the other provincial premiers do not appear to be willing to pay the price of being genuinely masters in their own houses (1958: 103-104).

Given their overall impression of government behaviour in Canada, scholars tended to summarize the political conflict between governments in Canada in the following manner:

> English-speaking Canada is determined to effect its purposes through the central government in such a way as to challenge what most French Canadians believe to be the necessary conditions of the expansion and survival of their culture. "Canadians and Canadiens" do not agree on the community to which they give their primary allegiance - Canada or French Canada - and this difference in allegiances makes impossible any agreement on the appropriate distribution of powers and privileges between federal and provincial governments (Smiley, 1965: 88).

Essentially, the Ottawa-Quebec focus embedded in the socio-cultural form of analysis contributed to the impression that this political conflict could be expressed in terms of these two governments alone. English-speaking provinces were subsumed under the federal banner. Moreover, arriving at a solution to this political conflict was a matter between these two governments as well. According to Smiley, a political entente could be reached between the centralist penchant of English

Canada and the decentralist view of the French-speaking community if a special division of powers was established between Ottawa and Quebec. The remaining provincial governments seemed expected to play a passive role in this exercise.

> Is a new federal equilibrium possible within which the demands of the two major cultural group [sic] can be met? The current situation has elements which may permit the reconciliation of the interests of and aspirations of English- and French-speaking Canadians within the framework of existing federal institutions. A solution can be conceived whose essential element would be a different sharing of legislative powers, revenues sources, and functional responsibilities between Quebec and Ottawa than between the federal government and the other provinces ... (1965: 93).

Overall, conventional wisdom placed the interests of the Quebec and Alberta governments at odds by the extent to which their interests were congruent with the federal government's. Apart from its brief bid to exercise federal powers at the provincial level during the Depression, Alberta placed its interests in Ottawa's conception of a centralized federation. This stood in conflict with Quebec's autonomist aims.

The Absence of Empirical Foundation

Under scrutiny, a general weakness in this interpretation of Alberta government behaviour surfaces: There were no ongoing studies - comparative or otherwise - performed by scholars during this period on Alberta's (or other English-speaking provincial government) behaviour that would be required to confirm that it was generally following Ottawa's lead, or that it was in conflict with Quebec. The conduct of anglophone provinces was treated in a generalized fashion unlike the comprehensive attention given to Ottawa and Quebec. As mentioned, the Alberta Social Credit administration between 1935 and 1942 was an exception to this rule. Note was taken of its revolt against the centralist trend. This form of action however, was considered to be an isolated episode in a more consistent tendency to follow Ottawa's lead. Such an interpretation of the Aberhart platform is likely responsible for the fact that no comparative analysis with Quebec's opposition to centralization between 1935 and 1942 was performed at all.

A reciprocal relationship appears to have been at play between an emphasis on the socio-cultural form of analysis used on the one hand, and this scant treatment of English-speaking provinces on the other. The pan-Canadian conception of federalism inherently militated against a thorough or ongoing investigation of provincial government positions by diluting them among a wider community's concerns. English-speaking provinces may have indeed been of little significance to Canada's governing process when compared to Quebec and Ottawa. As well, they may have generally submitted to a national agenda and taken a hostile view of Québec. But the pan-Canadian model used inherently led to this conclusion, rather than having tested it.

Conclusion

A review of the traditional depiction of Alberta-Quebec political aspirations from 1930 to 1960, reveals that no direct link was established between the activities of the Alberta and Quebec governments. In failing to document the behaviour of English-speaking provinces, the assertion that there existed a general propensity to follow Ottawa's political lead cannot be fully confirmed. Nor can the related allegation be solidified that provinces within this linguistic community were at odds with the aspirations of Quebec. To either confirm or reject the conventional wisdom of Quebec-Alberta antagonism, a comparative assessment of these two government's interests is required.

Notes

1 The "conventional wisdom" I refer to is derived primarily from the works of J.A. Corry, Frank Scott, and Donald Smiley. These three scholars wrote most extensively on the Canadian political environment from 1930 to 1960.

2 By excluding Quebec from the pan-Canadian conception of federalism, Smiley's distinction between pan-Canadianism and dualism (1965) seems blurred. Both conceptions agree that Ottawa is the chief representative of English Canadians. The distinction appears best understood as simply one of who represents the interests of the French-speaking community: Under the pan-Canadian model this representative is Ottawa; whereas,under the dualist framework it is Quebec City that speaks for francophones.

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2. Quebec-Alberta Interests Re-examined, 1930-1945

Introduction

When comparing the jurisdictional interests of Alberta and Quebec it is important to keep the following questions in mind: To what extent did the objectives or substance of Alberta and Quebec's positions differ or agree? Did Alberta accept generally the principle of centralization or did it, like Quebec, exhibit an interest in maintaining jurisdictional autonomy?

This chapter examines the conduct of both provinces at all Dominion-provincial conferences between 1930 and 1945. Each conference is considered in chronological order. There are three segments to the chapter. The first deals with the four Dominion-provincial conferences between 1930 and 1935. This period witnessed a federal preoccupation with devising short-term solutions to what were considered only temporary problems of provincial debt and social relief. Unlike the years immediately following this period, efforts by the federal government to centralize constitutional powers in order to deal with the relief and debt situation that the provinces were incapable of attending to, were absent (Struthers, 1986: chaps 3-4).

The second section covers the period between 1936 and 1941, which experienced only one federal-provincial conference in 1941. It was called by Ottawa for the expressed purpose of discussing and implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations. It is at this point that the federal government began actively pursuing a formal centralization of jurisdictional powers to deal with the remnants of the Depression and a growing war effort. And finally,the last segment provides an overview of the 1945-1946 Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction. Unable to secure the constitutional amendments it sought in 1941, the federal government returned with a similar set of proposals at this meeting.

1930-1935: A Piece-Meal Approach to the Jurisdictional Question

The first Dominion-provincial conference during this period took place in 1931. While there are no verbatim transcripts available on this meeting, the report of the proceedings provides adequate record of Alberta-Quebec conduct. Rather than listing the actual presentations and submissions put forth by each government, these reports offer summarizations of positions. Unlike the other conferences during this period, this specific meeting was the only one called by the Dominion that did not discuss specifically Depression-related matters. Instead its primary objective was to achieve provincial consent for the Statute of Westminster, the details of which had been previously negotiated between Ottawa and London. This Statute essentially rid the Dominion of having to seek British approval for amendments to the BNA Act.

Both Brownlee of Alberta and Taschereau of Quebec agreed in principle to the Statute (to the notion of being able to reform the Constitution domestically) but wanted to ensure that it would not alter the established practice of the Dominion seeking provincial approval for all major amendments to the Constitution (Canada,

1931: 12, 18, 21). Prime Minister Bennett responded by stating that nothing in the Statute implied that there was any change to the amendment procedure of the BNA Act. He offered to issue a statement in principle to this effect when Taschereau pressed the matter at length (Canada, 1931: 12). In the end, Brownlee gave his consent and Taschereau followed two weeks later after consulting the Quebec National Assembly (Canada, 1931: 21).

The two provinces expressed another similar concern. At the outset of the meeting Brownlee asserted that since all were agreed on the merit of the governments of the Dominion being able to amend the BNA Act domestically, he wanted to discuss the wider question of an amending procedure by which the Constitution could be changed. Alberta held that constitutional reform was needed in order to better define taxation jurisdictions, and rid the provinces of federal encroachments into provincial taxing areas (Canada, 1931: 9). Taschereau echoed the identical concern (Canada, 1931: 18). The federal government responded that this was not a meeting to address such matters, but after being pressed on the issue agreed to call a conference in the near future to deal with this concern (Canada, 1931: 19).

While this was a relatively short and uncontroversial meeting between the provinces and the federal government, the conduct of Alberta and Quebec is important. Alberta did not stray toward the federal government view of the Statute. Instead, it shared a similar preoccupation with Quebec - that it was intent on assuring the maintenance of its jurisdiction.

The next Dominion-Provincial Conference, that of 1933, was called by the federal government to deal primarily with the issue of implementing a national unemployment insurance programme and securing the necessary amendment to the BNA Act for the transfer of such a programme from the provinces' jurisdiction to Ottawa's. According to Struthers, however, the focus upon this one topic was used as a diversionary tactic by the non-activist federal state under Bennett to impede a wider discussion of the growing provincial problems of providing unemployment relief and servicing mounting debts (1983: 86). Quebec and Alberta viewed areas such as unemployment relief and pensions differently than their other legislative jurisdictions. Instead of enhancing their abilities to govern independently of the federal authority, the high cost of these responsibilities made them dependent on Ottawa. Provincial tax bases were insufficient to meet the expenses of such social programmes which, consequently, left the provinces dependent on federal aid. As a way to increase their overall jurisdictional independence both governments sought amendments to the Constitution to rid themselves of these powers.

Upon entering the meeting both Alberta and Quebec were hospitable to the idea of transfering unemployment insurance to the federal government. In a statement to the Edmonton Journal immediately prior to the meeting, Brownlee declared that his primary concern at the gathering would be to transfer the area of unemployment insurance to Ottawa (Bishop, 1932: 1). He stated that, "the government of this province has consistently maintained in the past that unemployment insurance can only be practically and effectively brought into operation in Canada through the federal government." To that effect he would support the principle of formally transferring such responsibilities to Ottawa (Bishop, 1932: 5). Brownlee also wanted to transfer the responsibilities of unemployment relief and pensions to the federal authority. Any additional transfer of powers however, was ruled-out (Bishop, 1932: 1,5). In a memo to Brownlee before the conference, a legal advisor

to the Alberta government reminded the Premier of the need for such limitations so that other, more valued provincial powers would not be compromised in the exercise. In fact, in this regard, the advisor was wary about constitutional revision at all.

> In the present difficult times, and assuming that it is your desire that the Province shall get rid of the financial burden of such services as unemployment relief, old age pensions, and unemployment insurance, it is to be expected that there might be too great a readiness to surrender [other, more] valuable legislative powers .... In particular, I submit that the vast subject of "property and civil rights" ought to be retained by the Province..... [As well,] insurance is a branch of "property and civil rights" which the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has decided is under the control of the Provinces, and I strongly urge that control of this subject, except the matters of unemployment insurance, be not surrendered. There are also important matters not covered in the provisions of the BNA Act, such as treaty making powers, in which the Provinces are deeply concerned, which [also] require careful study and examination. I therefore consider it my duty to urge that you do not at the conference called for the 17th of this month, commit the province to any specific changes to the BNA Act... (Jamieson, 1933).

Like Alberta, Quebec's submission to the conference focussed primarily on the issue of unemployment insurance. The submission concurred with the Alberta position by endorsing the need for an unemployment insurance scheme and stating that "it is important that this ... plan should be organized under the control of federal authorities" (Quebec, 1933: 13). As well, like Alberta, Quebec was amenable to a constitutional amendment that would place overall unemployment relief and pensions responsibilities in the hands of the federal government (Quebec, 1933: 3). No other transfer of powers was proposed.

While diverting attention to the problem of unemployment insurance specifically, Bennett had no intention of establishing such a programme. Preoccupied with his own government's fiscal integrity he proposed a scheme which was intended to provoke provincial opposition - namely, a plan whereby the federal government would formally assume policy control over an insurance programme but would make the provinces pay for it (Struthers, 1983: 90-91). Essentially this would not rid the provinces of the financial burden they were trying to shed. Consequently, the provinces refused to accept the federal plan (Canada, 1933: 2).

The conference broke up into sub-committees to discuss the remaining items on the agenda, which had been proposed by the provinces (Canada, 1933: 1). There were four items put forward dealing with jurisdictional powers in particular - those being: a provincial desire for increased federal funding for unemployment relief and pensions; a provincial concern about the federal government duplicating taxes in provincial spheres; a need to reach a uniform standard company law between the provinces; and a provincial desire to avoid federal-provincial overlap in concurrent jurisdiction (particularly in the areas of health and agriculture). None of the reports that followed from these committees (and all were unanimously endorsed by the provinces) proposed any sort of constitutional change. In fact, only the first committee, the one discussing unemployment relief and pensions, produced anything

more than a simple recommendation for further study of the issue (Canada, 1932: 1-2). Recognizing that the federal government was not going to assume unemployment responsibilities or pensions (Struthers, 1983: 91), the committee recommended that the federal government employ a standard formula by which the provinces could predict the amount of funds coming from Ottawa (it was proposed that 50% of the provincial expenditure would be a place to start). Control over those funds, and the policies which those funds would be used for, would be entirely in the hands of the provincial governments (Canada, 1932: 2). It was added that, if the provinces chose to institute a public works programme as a form of relief the federal government would be obligated to contribute (Canada, 1932: 2). According to Struthers the federal government made it clear that it did not feel bound by these recommendations and "as a solution to the crisis in relief financing ... the conference was a disaster" (1983: 91).

Once more, the record of government behaviour at this conference demonstrated mutual interests between Quebec and Alberta. Both entered the meeting primarily concerned with transfering unemployment and pension obligations to the federal authority. Neither interpreted concessions of jurisdiction in areas such as these as a threat to provincial autonomy. In fact the opposite seemed true. That changed for both governments, however, when the federal government attached the condition that the provinces help pay for an unemployment insurance programme. As well, given the unanimous provincial approval for the report of the committee on unemployment relief and pensions, one may assume that if Alberta and Quebec were to be burdened with such responsibilities both wanted complete control over the policy making privileges.

The 1934 Dominion-provincial conference was called by Ottawa to discuss the problem of mounting provincial debt. Like the two previous meetings, there are no verbatim transcripts. The meeting report as well as the submissions made by the various governments provide sufficient information on Alberta and Quebec's behaviour.

Alberta's submission to the conference consisted of a lengthy explanation of the reasons why the province had assumed the largest debt per capita in Canada (Alberta, 1934: 1-4). Combatting the federal government's assertion that the province was carelessly overspending, Alberta held that its large debt was a result of three circumstances beyond its control. First, it had to provide infrastructure over one of the largest provincial territories in the country with one of the sparsest populations from which to draw funds (Alberta, 1934: 1-2). Exacerbating this problem was the fact that Alberta had only recently received access to its resource revenues to pay for such endeavours (Alberta, 1934: 1). Second, Alberta was responsible for providing relief for the massive number of immigrants that the federal government was settling in the province (Alberta, 1934: 1-2). And finally, the federal government had tended to loan the Alberta government money for public works at rates of high interest, yet provide grants to other provinces for such endeavours (Alberta, 1932: 3). Importantly, Alberta made a point of adding to this final complaint that it did not begrudge the other provinces that obtained such grants, it merely requested that it receive equal treatment. Unlike its position at the 1933 meeting, Alberta did not suggest a takeover of relief responsibilities by the federal government in order to alleviate its debt situation. Although not specific, it suggested instead that discussions should commence between the federal and

provincial authorities on the subject of transfering federal taxing powers to the provinces in order to deal with these responsibilities.

Quebec's submission to the conference also argued for increased powers to raise funds for the expenses of relief as opposed to requesting that the federal government assume such responsibilities. Quebec proposed that the federal government pass legislation permitting the provinces to hold lotteries as an additional way for the provinces to raise funds for their expenses (Quebec, 1934: 1-3). The federal government merely stated that it would take such a suggestion under review (Canada, 1934: 1).

Outside of the submissions, the conference produced a unanimous report on the issue of employment and relief measures for the year 1934. The report accepted the federal government's commitment not to assume any of the jurisdictional responsibilty for such areas of policy (Canada, 1934: 1-2). Its recommendations were (Canada, 1934: 1-2):

> i) That the federal government would continue to provide assistance to the provinces until the Depression was over.
> ii) That the federal government must cooperate with the provinces should those governments decide to set up an inter-provincial commission to administer relief funds.
> iii) That the provinces had no opposition to the federal government providing extra funds to those provinces in which the unemployment situation was worse than the national average.
> iv) That the federal government should increase its contributions to provinces for its land settlement programmes.

Again, while nothing concrete had been agreed to by both orders of government regarding the problems discussed, Alberta and Quebec concurred with each other on the main issues discussed. Unlike the meeting of 1933, both seemed to accept that the federal government would not assume the responsibility for unemployment insurance, pensions, or unemployment relief. In response both provinces insisted that they should receive greater independent fiscal powers from Ottawa to fulfil these responsibilites.

The 1935 Dominion-provincial conference seemed to witness a shift in federal government attitude toward the problems of the Depression.[1] Under King's new administration, the agenda for the conference was wider than had been those of Bennett. Along with the provincial debt issue, King was willing to discuss the question of what level of government should be responsible for unemployment relief, as well as the accompanying question of possible constitutional amendments (Canada, 1936: 1-7). In King's words,

> We assemble at a difficult time in our history. Never before have so many and so intricate problems presented themselves at one time and the same. Unemployment, taxation, social services, constitutional questions, and other of our problems, are all formidable in themselves. Involving each of them does, questions of jurisdiction between the Dominion and the provinces, they are all the more baffling and difficult of solution [sic] .... In the structure of our federal state, each of the governments represented here ... is sovereign within the fields of its

> own jurisdiction.... Yet we should not lose sight of the fact that governments are only institutions created by [people] to serve human needs. After all, the citizens of the provinces are citizens of the Dominion. The individuals whose interests the provinces seek to serve are the same individuals for whom the Dominion is concerned (Canada, 1936: 8-9).

King continued by outlining his primary objective at the meeting - namely, to determine what changes in Canada during the Depression warranted alterations to the jurisdictional capacities of each level of government. Where alterations to the constitution were not possible, he suggested that all governments devise a formal procedure for cooperation (Canada, 1936: 9). Several sub-committees were then struck to discuss the specific items on the agenda. These items were (Canada, 1936: 22):

> i) Questions relating to the procedure which should be followed in amending the British North America Act.
> ii) Questions relating to the financial relations between the Dominion and the provinces, and to taxation.
> iii) Questions relating to unemployment relief.
> iv) Questions relating to mining development and taxation-questions relating to agriculture and marketing.
> v) Questions relating to tourist traffic development.

The recently elected Alberta Social Credit administration focussed on one issue in particular - that being, provincial debt and the need to increase provincial taxing capacities to deal with it (Canada, 1936: 21, 59). Premier Aberhart stated that it was not acceptable to Alberta that it be dependent on the federal government in order to fulfil its unemployment relief responsibilities or fulfil its debt obligations (Canada, 1936: 21). There were two problems that needed to be addressed for provincial self-sufficiency to be possible. First, the federal government had to reduce the interest rates on its outstanding loans to the provinces (Canada, 1936: 59). This reduction in interest rates would be unacceptable, however, if the federal government could dictate the future borrowing abilities of Alberta. When the federal government proposed to establish a national loans council that would work to reduce provincial debts through converting them into bonds with significantly reduced rates of interests (Canada, 1936: 43-44), Alberta was the only province not willing to consent to the proposal on the basis that the council, under the control of the federal government, would also be mandated to supervise provincial borrowing. According to Mallory,

> To agree to borrow in the future only with the consent of the Dominion Minister of Finance advised by the Governor of the Bank of Canada would be based on grounds of both principle and expediency. It would, in [Aberhart's] terminology, turn over a portion of sovereignty of the people to the ... Dominion Minister of Finance and the Bank of Canada (1976: 133).

As an alternative to the loans council proposal, however, Aberhart was willing to have the federal government assume all of Alberta's debt in return for which the province would rent its income tax jurisdiction to Ottawa until the debt was retired (Alberta, 1935: 4). The advantage over the federal loan council proposal would be that Alberta would be able to determine the rate of interest on the loan, it would set the rate at which the government would tax income in the province, and would be able to cancel the arrangement whenever it saw fit (Alberta, 1935: 4, 7-8).

Aberhart's second proposal aimed at establishing greater provincial self-sufficiency was for the provinces to acquire more taxation powers from the federal government (Canada, 1936: 59). While not specific on the new taxation powers he desired, he was insistent that talks begin immediately on amending the BNA Act to this end (Canada, 1936: 61). According to Aberhart, such an amendment would permit Alberta "to do our own business" (Canada, 1936: 61).

Quebec listed three specific concerns at the conference, all of which were consistent with those of Alberta's. The first concern was unemployment. Like Aberhart, Taschereau asserted that his government would no longer simply beg for federal money as a way of addressing this problem (Canada, 1936: 51). Instead, it was important for the provinces to live within their own means, independent of Ottawa. This led to a second concern - that of provincial debt (Canada, 1936: 11). Like Aberhart, Taschereau insisted that a lower federal rate of interest was necessary for the provinces to pay their debts, but unlike Aberhart, he was willing to submit to federal supervision of provincial borrowing under the proposed loans council (Canada, 1936: 51 and Mallory, 1976: 133). Comparing this position with Aberhart's proposal would indicate that Alberta was slightly more emphatic about provincial legislative independence from Ottawa. And finally, Quebec's ability to provide for its own responsibilities would be enhanced by additional "legal ways" for it to access funds (Canada, 1936: 11). While not specific as to what"legal ways" he meant, one would assume that he was referring to taxation powers. To acquire these fiscal means Taschereau, like Aberhart, insisted on constitutional amendments, and called for a federal-provincial conference on the matter (Canada, 1936: 11, 51). Similar to Aberhart's position, constitutional change was desired by Taschereau that would allow Quebec to govern more independently of Ottawa (Canada, 1936: 51).

The conference ended with no federal commitments on constitutional reform, nor on refinancing the provincial debts as Quebec and Alberta were pressing for. According to Struthers (1983: 139), King's apparent willingness to address such issues had been deceiving. Up to this point at least, King had no interest in bailing the provincial governments out of debt with federal funds nor in surrendering fields of taxation. Rather, as had been the case with Bennett, he was preoccupied with maintaining the fiscal integrity of his own government (Struthers, 1983: 139, 140-141). Hints of this attitude appeared in the meeting's minutes when he declared that his government would not feel bound to implement any of the recommendations of the conference (Canada, 1936: 46). Regardless of the federal position, however, Alberta and Quebec continued to express similar ambitions at the conference table. In contrast to the 1933 meeting at which the federal government entertained the idea of assuming jurisdiction over unemployment relief and debt responsibilities, neither province was intent on approving this proposition. Instead, both concentrated on the issue of acquiring increased independent taxation capacities to cope with these problems on their own (as they had done at the 1934 meeting when Ottawa refused to discuss the topic of jurisdictional transfer altogether). The only

difference which appeared between the two was that Quebec was willing to accept greater federal government supervision of its debt repayment than was Alberta.

To summarize, the substance of Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional interests was similar between 1930 and 1935. As will be recalled, Corry had maintained that at the outset of the Depression English-speaking provinces came to accept a centralized, Ottawa-led national purpose due to their realization that that they could not afford to support many of the legislative responsibilities that fell within their jurisdictions. While it is true that Alberta recognized its inability to afford unemployment and pensions responsibilities and, that it volunteered to transfer these areas of policy making to Ottawa in 1933, Corry's notion of an anglophone provincial government acceptance of centralization must be tempered by two considerations: First, any Alberta propensity to support a centralization of powers was limited to unemployment and pensions responsibilities. Insofar as one might consider this an endorsement of the centralization principle, Quebec must be considered to have supported this principle as well. Second, Alberta refused to hand over any of its taxing powers. Submitting to the cause of centralization surely would have implied handing over the taxing capacities needed by Ottawa to pay for these responsibilities. Therefore, rather than accepting a centralization of powers per se, Alberta appeared to be simply acting out of self-interest to rid itself of costly expenditures. The substance of Quebec's position was the same.

Toward the mid-1930s, Alberta, like Quebec, abandoned altogether any effort to transfer these social responsibilities to Ottawa. Both were resigned to the fact that Ottawa would not accept these legislative obligations. In response to this situation, and to the fact that having to borrow funds from the federal government would put them at the mercy of Ottawa's interest rates, both argued for increased revenue-raising capacities to deal with these policy areas independently of Ottawa. Corry maintained that English-speaking provinces viewed their inability to fulfil their jurisdictional responsibilities as a situation which called inevitably for a centralist solution. Alberta's position however, challenges this observation. Its response to the situation was not to insist that these responsibilities could only be fulfilled by Ottawa. Rather, it accepted the federal position without argument and sought to acquire independent means of providing relief on its own. Again, the intentions of Alberta and Quebec's positions appear to have been similar on this matter. Additionally, this Alberta position cannot be attributed simply to some kind of aberrant behaviour on the part of the Aberhart administration. It was Brownlee's government which initially took this stance in 1934. As is seen below, however, Alberta would return to its position of wanting to relinquish unemployment and pensions powers but once again it would refuse to transfer taxing capacities alongside them. Quebec would take the same position. Overall, there did not appear to be a tendency on the part of Alberta to accept an Ottawa-led approach to overall Canadian governance as conventional academic wisdom describes.

The Rowell-Sirois Conference, 1941: Ottawa's First Attempt at Centralization

The period between 1936 and 1941 was one in which the federal government began to assume a centralist approach. This shift in outlook was most markedly displayed in Ottawa's striking of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations (the Rowell-Sirois Commission) in August of 1937, and its attempt to implement the Commission's recommendations at the Dominion-Provincial Conference of 1941. The

organization of Quebec and Alberta's positions may be divided into two stages - their immediate reaction to the Commission's mandate, followed by their behaviour at the 1941 conference discussing the Commission's recommendations.

From the beginning, the Royal Commission's political purpose was widely interpreted as a federal government attempt to centralize legislative powers at Ottawa (Saunders and Black, 1940). Unlike in previous years, Ottawa seemed intent on addressing seriously the question of changing jurisdictional responsibilities in light of the Depression. The Commission's mandate was straightforward:

> That as a result of economic and social developments since 1867, the Dominion and provincial governments have found it necessary in the public interest to accept responsibilities of a character ... not foreseen at the time of Confederation .... [T]he discharge of these responsibilities involves expenditures of such a magnitude as to demand ... the wisest possible division of powers and functions between governments .... [T]he revenue sources available to provincial governments are not in general adequate to enable them to discharge their constitutional responsibilities ... [and] consequently if they are to discharge their responsibilities, either new revenue sources must be allotted to them or their constitutional responsibilities and governmental burdens must be reduced .... The Prime Minister, therefore ... recommends : - That it is expedient to provide for a re-examination of the economic and financial basis of Confederation and of the distribution of legislative powers.... (Canada, 1940, book 1: 9).

While the official mandate was not to reduce provincial powers specifically, the make-up of Commission personnel led observers to conclude that it would inevitably seek such a goal. A 1937 Canadian Forum editorial, for instance, after expressing its belief that "the national government is the only authority which can undertake the responsibility of effecting minimum standards of living for the whole Dominion", gladly noted that in its opinion "the five members [of the Commission] are so little given to indulge in ponderous empty rhetoric, that for the moment one can hardly resist the temptation to conclude that, when Mr. King appointed them, he really intended something to be done [to this end]" (Canadian Forum, 1937: 226-227).

The immediate response by the Alberta government was one of contempt. According to Alberta, the Commission would inevitably recommend a centralization of powers in Canada which it could not accept (Alberta, 1938: foreward). Consequently, the Alberta government withheld recognition of the Commission's legitimacy by refusing to appear before it. As well, it issued an in-depth study of its own into the problems of Dominion-provincial relations - namely, The Case for Alberta. Alberta's independent study amounted to what Elton (1979: 113) refers to as "perhaps one of the most comprehensive research reports compiled by a western Canadian province regarding Dominion-provincial relations." The Case for Alberta was divided into two sections. The first outlined the sources of Alberta's economic problems and jurisdictional concerns. The second dealt with Alberta's theoretical interpretations of Confederation and the province's opposition to the centralization thrust of Ottawa.

The first part included a detailed outline of the inherent economic problems of a province dependent on agricultural staples and the economic discrimination that

Alberta had felt traditionally subject to at the hands of central Canadian capital and federal government policy. The federal policies referred to included high interest rates and the coinciding private and public debt burdens, freight rates, and the protective tariff (Alberta, 1938, book 1: 11-263). As well, treatment was given to the province's inability to meet the costs of its social responsibilities. This inability was due to both a lack of provincial income sources and a federal ability to launch programmes with its spending power and then pull-out of helping with costs whenever it saw fit (Alberta, 1938, book 1: 281-332). The section finished with a long series of recommendations for changes to Ottawa's legislating habits and the federal system of government in general. Several of the findings suggested changes to jurisdictional responsibilities, many of which pointed to an enhancement of provincial powers. With regard to private debt, The Case for Alberta held that the private money lending institutions supervised by the federal government had "lost their usefulness" by maintaining high interest rates. Consequently, if the federal government did not take action to lower these rates the responsibility for regulating them should fall within provincial jurisdiction as Alberta had attempted to accomplish through legislation which was disallowed by Ottawa (1938, book 1: 132-138, 375). As well, the study had several suggestions with regard to taxation rights. To meet mounting debt and social services expenditures Alberta called for an increase in ability to tax, including restricting Ottawa's ability to tax indirectly and eliminating the federal government's right to direct taxation altogether (1938, book 1: 364-366). As well, the study proposed that the federal government assume all costs of unemployment relief and pensions (1938, book 1: 294, 304, 376). This position represented a return to Alberta's stance in 1933. Once again however, Alberta was not willing to surrender the financial capacities to cover such responsibilities (Mallory, 1954: 144).

The second segment offered Alberta's view of the original intention of the federal exercise. Federalism was ideally viewed as a safeguard for democracy, ensuring that the component provincial units, which were somehow closer to understanding the needs of the individual citizen, would prevail over the central government. Ottawa had a primary purpose of simply administering the wishes of the provincial governments (1938, book 2: 46-49). From this flowed Alberta's compact interpretation of Confederation. Provincial supremacy was central to this interpretation.

> ...Canada is a union of nine separate social groupings, each organized within clearly defined borders which separate each province. Just as the important unit of any social grouping is each individual, so the important unit in our federal union is each province. Just as it is impossible to have a healthy, satisfied and prosperous province unless the individuals which comprise its people are healthy satisfied and prosperous, so to is it impossible to build a progressive and prosperous Canada unless that is the condition of its component parts, the provinces.... [T]he only basis on which a federal union ... can flourish is an inherent belief that in association with other provinces the individual citizens of each province can get what they want more effectively than if provinces operated in isolation .... The primary objective of confederation is that by close co-operation with other provinces, each

province will gain what its people desire more efficiently than could be achieved otherwise (1938, book 2: 47-48).

The study went on to suggest that all matters of provincial jurisdiction should be free of interference from Ottawa and that all federal government policies which affected provincial powers should require the consent of the provinces (1938, book 2: 49). To that effect, there would have to be changes to the BNA Act (1938, book 2: 50). Overall, Alberta recommended that all "provincial governments take early action to establish the sovereignty of their people within the boundaries of their own province to control policy in respect to all economic and political arrangements" (1938, book 2: 52). The Report concluded by suggesting that the provinces should obtain the federal capacity to create their own credit authorities and, in contrast to the curent arrangements, Bank of Canada policies should be subject to the control of these authorities (1938, book 2: 53).

The response by the Quebec government to the striking of the Rowell-Sirois Commission was similar to that of Alberta. Quebec's submission to the Rowell-Sirois hearings, while not espousing an increase in provincial jurisdiction, most certainly offered a hostile opposition to the concept of a centralization of powers at Ottawa. In the words of a Saturday Night Review editorial in 1938, the Quebec government had made it clear that,

> ...the behaviour of the Provinces in respect to all matters for which sovereignty was accorded to them by the British North America Act is none of the business of the Commission, and have told it, in language which may have been diplomatic but was only barely polite, to get out of Quebec and leave the provincial authorities alone (1938: 1).

The Quebec entry echoed the interpretation of Confederation found in The Case for Alberta.

> Under our federal system of government, the Provinces are separate entities, sovereign in their own field of action and in no way subject to Federal control.... To recognize the jurisdiction of your Commission would amount to an acknowledgement that there exists in favour of the Federal Government, a supremacy over the Provincial Governments ... [and] this Government feels that, by so doing, it would fail in its duty.... This Province cannot agree to an abridgement of its prerogatives, as a self governing political entity (Quebec, 1938: 1-2).

Regarding the possibility of amending the Constitution in order to implement any of the recommendations of the Commission, the Quebec government reminded Ottawa of the need for the unanimous consent of the provinces.

> It is the considered opinion of this Government that the British North America Act is a ratification of a compact having clearly the character of a contract..... The contractual character of our Confederation has been so often acknowledged by states[persons] and jurists, that it seems unnecessary to insist any longer. The Government of this Province declares that it firmly adheres to this doctrine. Hence an all

> important consequence. Being of the nature of a contract, the Federal Compact cannot be amended, nor modified, except with the consent of all parties thereto; that is to say all the Provinces (Quebec, 1938: 4).

The rhetoric applied to the idea of centralization was similar to Alberta's as well. Like Alberta, such a concept was contrary to the principles of democracy. "Centralization which seems to be desired by those who are hostile to Provincial rights is a national and social evil. Centralization of powers is principally found in so called totalitarian states" (Quebec, 1938: 5). Again, like Alberta, the Quebec government advocated that democracy was enhanced by a strong relationship between the citizen and the provincial governments since these governments were "closer to the people" (Quebec, 1938: 5). Finally, Quebec opposed any amendment to the Constitution whatsoever. Unlike Alberta, it appeared content to defend provincial jurisdiction from federal encroachment instead of expanding upon it.

> The people of this province have full confidence in the democratic parliamentary system of governments as organized under the Constitution of 1867. They believe that there is no necessity of amending the Constitution in order to cope with our modern problems; but that it is sufficient to apply the Constitution as enacted with the same broad view and conciliatory spirit which have guided the Fathers of Confederation (Quebec, 1938: 5).

The Rowell-Sirois Commission's Report of 1940 confirmed Alberta and Quebec's mutual suspicion - that the Report would advocate a centralization of powers. In simplified terms, the Report's main recommendations were divided into two different "plans" (Canada, 1940, book 2: 81-149). Plan One was the path of action the Commission recommended for the federal government. In simplified terms, its main suggestions were (Canada, 1940, book 2: 77-129):

> i) That the federal government assume all provincial debts under a Federal Finance Commission which would ensure that the provinces relinquish sufficient funds to aid with the repayment of these debts. The Commission would also be responsible for determining national standards for social services and education in order that it could calculate the appropriate funds needed for National Adjustment Grants (mentioned below).
> ii) That the federal government assume full responsibility for all unemployed employables (which would enable the federal government to implement a national unemployment insurance programme or whatever it deemed appropriate in this area).
> iii) That the provinces, to compensate the federal government for taking on these heavy burdens would relinquish to Ottawa: present federal grants-in-aid, the complete right to levy income tax (both corporate and personal), and all succession duties.
> iv) That those provinces unable to provide education and social services at a minimum Canadian standard would receive irreduceable unconditional National Adjustment Grants that would be adjusted upwards every five years if need be.

v) That provinces would have their future right to borrow unimpaired.
vi) That the federal government should pay provincial authorities an amount of taxes collected from mining and oil companies to a maximum of 10% of their profits.

Plan Two was suggested if the first path could not be pursued. This list of suggestions included the idea that the federal government would collect all taxes listed above, and that agricultural marketing and transportation would fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal government (Canada, 1940, book 2: 131-149). The federal government made it clear that it wished to implement the suggestions outlined in Plan One (Mallory, 1954: 147-148). Alberta's immediate reaction to the Report was consistent with the arguments put forth in the The Case for Alberta. Aberhart claimed that adopting the Report's recommendations "would reduce the provinces to glorified county councils" (Beaver, 1941: 9). The Alberta government issued a formal reply to the Report as soon as it was released (Alberta, 1940). It steadfastly resisted the idea of surrendering taxation rights; it noted that the loss of existing federal subsidies would cost the province two million dollars annually and that Alberta would most likely not qualify for National Adjustment Grants; it held that nothing was to be gained by the average Albertan if the federal government was to assume the provincial debt seeing as all citizens would continue to pay for it; and it asserted that provincial borrowing potential would be in a worse situation seeing as the provinces would lose substantial revenue sources used to secure loans (Alberta, 1940: 1-3). The reply concluded that:

> It should be evident from the foregoing that the adoption of the recommendations [of the Rowell-Sirois Report] will reduce Provincial autonomy very drastically in favour of increased centralization of control by the Federal Government, and it will establish an over-riding financial control of the Provinces centred in the proposed Finance Commission. This would seem to be a complete denial of the basic principles of democracy and indicates a trend toward totalitarianism (Alberta, 1940: 2).

It is important to note that in late 1940 the federal government was able to secure from the provinces the necessary transfer of jurisdiction to assume responsibility for unemployment insurance. According to Struthers (1983: 198-199), the federal government felt it imperative to establish such a programme due to the outbreak of war and the need to have such a cushion in place when the large number of troops returned to Canada from abroad. King believed that it was the ideal time to implement such change due to the fact that Godbout had replaced Duplessis in Quebec (Struthers, 1983: 198). Under Godbout's leadership, Quebec's resistance to centralization seemed less aggressive. Indebted to the federal Liberal Party for its aid in defeating the Duplessis regime, Godbout offered a more conciliatory approach to the King government's ambitions (Quinn, 1979: 105-107). Aberhart appeared to be the last holdout to such a scheme, but King was prepared to push ahead with it if this was the only voice of resistance (Struthers, 1983: 198). Eventually, under the notion that opposing such a plan would be unpatriotic given the war effort, Alberta agreed to the federal initiative (Struthers, 1983: 199). Importantly however, without the recommendations by the Rowell-Sirois Commission in place at the time

of amendment, the provinces were not asked to relinquish financial jurisdiction to Ottawa in order to support the costs of this programme.

In response to the Rowell-Sirois Commission's Report the federal government called a Dominion-provincial conference for January of 1941, for the expressed purpose of discussing and, if possible, implementing the Commission's recommendations. The intention of the federal government appeared clear. In his opening address to the conference King said that,

> ... the report commends itself strongly to our judgement. It is our considered opinion that the adoption of the commission's recommendations is necessary to put our country in a position to pursue a policy which shall achieve the maximum war effort, and at the same time lay a sound foundation for post-war reconstruction. That is our conviction, after a careful study of the report and its recommendations (Canada, 1941: 5).

Godbout's short opening presentation to the conference stated that Quebec had come to the meeting "with an open mind on all questions which are dealt with in the Sirois Report" and that it had not committed itself one way or the other on any of its recommendations (Canada, 1941: 16). He also stated that with Canada at war, his province "would not deny the federal authority the right and the duty to take measures to deal with it" (Canada, 1941: 17). Godbout added, however, that any transfer of provincial powers to Ottawa must be of a temporary nature only under the extenuating circumstances of war. Quebec would remain faithful to its historical position - namely, that it would never formally relinquish its provincial jurisdictional prerogatives to Ottawa. These powers were essential to the large degree of provincial autonomy that Quebec had secured at Confederation (Canada, 1941: 17).

Alberta stated that, war or no war, it was completely opposed to the idea of transfering powers to Ottawa even on a temporary basis (Canada, 1941: 56-58). The powers that the Dominion possessed at the time were seen as sufficient to carry out the war effort (Canada, 1941: 57). In Aberhart's words,

> The statement that the acceptance of these proposals [of the Rowell-Sirois Report] is evidence of good faith and loyalty in this titanic struggle against the forces of totalitarianism is in my opinion so evidently misleading and far fetched that it should be looked upon as dangerous ..... [T]hese proposals involve a centralization of power in direct opposition to the principles of democracy (Canada, 1941: 57).

Alberta stood opposed to the federal government's desire to assume exclusive rights to levy provincial taxes. Alberta was willing to concede that the federal government had the right to increase its own income taxes, but the income tax field would have to remain open to the provincial governments as well (Canada, 1941: 59). And with regard to the proposed Financial Commission which would determine national standards in education, Aberhart expressed his opposition to such an idea. Interestingly, he used Quebec's right to possess a special system different from the rest of Canada as a reason to combat such standardization (Canada, 1941: 59).

When the conference attempted to break into sub-committees to discuss the recommendations of the Rowell-Sirois Report, the Alberta delegation, unlike that of Godbout's, refused to attend the gatherings (Canada, 1941: 70). British Columbia and Ontario agreed with Alberta's stance (Canada, 1941: 70). But, unlike Alberta, both left open the possibility of discussing interim measures to support the federal government's war effort (Mallory, 1954: 150). Alberta's outright refusal to discuss any aspects of the Report "in effect killed the conference" (Mallory, 1954: 151). Consequently, the meeting ended abruptly. Once again, Alberta continued to resist a centralized conception of federalism during the Rowell-Sirois Commission deliberations. Apart from unemployment insurance prerogatives, Alberta and Quebec refused to hand over areas of jurisdiction that the federal government deemed were essential to the war effort and to the provision of a country-wide equality of condition. In fact, in comparison to the Godbout administration Alberta appeared more emphatic about its jurisdictional concerns by refusing to even discuss the Rowell-Sirois Commision's findings at the sub-committee level.

To summarize, a comparison of Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional interests between 1936 and 1941 shows that the substance of those interests was similar. This was consistent with the 1930-1935 period. Neither was willing to transfer permanently the powers requested by Ottawa. Several corrections to the academic account are required. This account held that Quebec's position on the Rowell-Sirois Report was consistent with its historical quest for provincial autonomy. In contrast, Corry and Scott portrayed the Alberta Social Credit platform during this period as a brief episode of abnormal behaviour in a more consistent pattern of succumbing to the ambitions of the federal government and the English-speaking community. While perhaps more intense than his Alberta counterparts, Aberhart's administration did not depart from the substance of the previous jurisdictional policies of the Brownlee government. To this point, Alberta, like Quebec, demonstrated a consistent aversity to the centralist principle.

A further point is worth discussing with reference to the intensity of the Aberhart administration's opposition to centralization. While Quebec and Alberta did not differ on the principle of opposing centralization, their actions on this principle took on two different, but complementary, forms - namely, protecting versus expanding powers. If the latter is considered a more intense expression of a resistance to centralization then; ironically (given conventional academic wisdom), it was Alberta, not Quebec, which demonstrated more passion in this endeavour. Alberta sought powers outside of those prescribed by the Constitution, whereas Quebec defended the constitutional status quo. Moreover, symbolic gestures were made by Alberta which suggest that it held a a greater passion than Quebec for the maintenance of provincial jurisdictional competence. For instance, while Godbout made it clear that he was not willing to formally transfer any provincial powers to Ottawa, he was prepared to hear Ottawa's case. Alberta was not. A second example of such symbolic behaviour may be drawn into this discussion from the 1935 meeting. Alberta would not consider the loans council proposal of the federal government because it would permit federal supervision of its provincial debt re-payment. Quebec, on the other hand, was prepared to submit to the federal terms.

The Reconstruction Conference, 1945-1946: Ottawa's Centralization Efforts Continued

After the collapse of the 1941 conference, the federal government, unable to secure the permanent amendments to the Constitution it had desired, opted to impose unilaterally a temporary tax rental arrangement with the provinces under its emergency war powers. The 1941 tax rental arrangement excluded the provinces from the right to levy personal income taxes, all corporation income taxes, and direct taxation. In return, the federal government would either give the provinces a tax rental payment based on revenues that Ottawa collected in the province (which Quebec opted to choose) or it would assume the total cost of servicing provincial debts (which Alberta selected). As well, the federal government discouraged the provinces from levying succession duties by subtracting the amount that the provinces might collect in this area from the Ottawa tax rental payments to the provinces or the amount it gave the provinces to service their debts (Bothwell et. al., 1989: 56, 76).

In 1945, with the 1941 tax arrangement about to expire given the impending termination of the war, the federal government called a Dominion-Provincial Conference to discuss the subject of Reconstruction. To approach the task of Reconstruction in a country-wide manner the federal government brought proposals to the meeting which were very similar to the ones brought forth at the Dominion-Provincial Conference of 1941. These were contained in the Marsh Report. The conference was divided into two separate sittings, the first in August of 1945 and the second in April and May of 1946.

The federal government proposed the following at the meeting (Canada, 1946: 75-118):

> i) Regarding old age pensions: that Ottawa assume all costs for those over 70 years of age and 50% of costs for those aged 65 to 70 years.
> ii) On top of already assuming unemployment insurance, the federal government would provide 85% of the costs for relief of uninsureable unemployed employables.
> iii) Ottawa would provide annual conditional health grants (on a percapita basis) to the provinces.
> iv) The provinces would forego the right to levy personal income tax, succession duties, and corporation tax - leaving the federal government with the exclusive right to tax in these fields. In return, the federal government would provide annual payments to all the provinces. The payments would amount to 150 per cent of each province's Wartime Tax Agreement receipts or fifteen dollars per capita of each province's 1941 or 1942 population. Each province could choose between the formula it preferred.

It will be noted in these suggestions that the federal government proposed a series of conditional cost-shared programmes instead of providing unconditional payments to the provinces as was suggested in 1941. The idea of the Dominion attaching conditions to its grants had actually been warned against by the Rowell-Sirois Report because it was bound to create unnecessary friction between the two levels of government (1940, Book 1: 259) .

Duplessis had returned to power in Quebec. His opening statement labelled the federal plan as comparable to "Hitlerism" and asserted that Quebec would not tolerate such centralization (Canada, 1946: 20). Once again, Duplessis expressed his provincial rights conception of federalism. His province would never surrender the powers that the federal government suggested. He held that this would kill the proposal as, according to his understanding of the amending procedure, all provinces would have to consent to any constitutional change (Canada, 1946: 20-21). With Aberhart's death in 1942, E.C. Manning had taken over the office of Premier in Alberta. Manning spoke in a fashion similar to Duplessis. Any plan to concentrate more authority in Ottawa was deemed as "unsound" (Canada, 1946: 40). It flowed against Alberta's conception of democracy seeing as provincial governments that were somehow "closer to the people" and should therefore be equipped with as many significant powers as possible (Canada, 1946: 40, 44). As well, given provincial social responsibilities, the provinces needed more taxation rights, not less, as Ottawa proposed (Canada, 1946: 42, 45).

After statements by all governments, the first meeting established a Dominion-Provincial Co-ordinating Committee to meet before the next meeting in the spring of 1946. The Committee would hear submissions by the provincial governments and establish an agenda for the second gathering. The Alberta and Quebec submissions to the Committee were very much the same. With the ominous task of Reconstruction under consideration each softened their original position and considered the concept of altering the federal proposals and then accepting them in a non-permanent tax rental agreement until the crisis was over. Alberta began by addressing each element of the federal proposal. The federal grants for social programmes were too low and had too many strings attached for the province to accept (Canada, 1946: 209). The grants would have to be raised and made unconditional (Canada, 1946: 211). As for taxation, Alberta proposed that the provinces retain the right to tax corporations, which would be deductible from federal corporation taxes and from annual per capita grants to the provinces (Canada, 1946: 211). Alberta also called for the right to a retail turnover tax (Canada, 1946: 211). And finally, Alberta was prepared to accept this altered set of federal proposals on an informal, non-permanent basis until the task of Reconstruction was complete. As well, Alberta proposed that it would adhere to a tax rental agreement with a minimum trial period of three years, after which any province could opt out with twelve months notice (Canada, 1946: 212).

Quebec's submission reiterated the belief in the provincial rights model of Confederation and in the notion that the federal government derives its powers from provincial consent, not the contrary (Canada, 1946: 355). It then warned that agreeing to the federal proposals on taxation would amount to depriving the province permanently of its autonomy, which the Quebec government could not accept (Canada, 1946: 357-361). In the government's words, "provincial autonomy cannot be safeguarded by substituting a federal grant for the fiscal independence of the Provinces" (Canada, 1946: 365). Based on this position of wanting permanent control of provincial jurisdiction, but considering the task of Reconstruction, Quebec, like Alberta, stated that it would consider the idea of a temporary tax rental agreement with Ottawa.

> During the time necessary for the study and solution of these Canadian problems, a temporary agreement, precise, clear and categorical, the

> duration of which would depend on the needs of the federal body and the needs of the Provinces, might be entered into, as a temporary measure, but based on the very foundation of the Canadian Constitution. In short, it would be possible to rent, and we insist on the term rent, in return for fair compensation ..., certain present taxation powers of the Provinces, powers that could reasonably be rented without in any way impeding ... the progress and prosperity of the Province (Canada, 1946: 366).

The second and final meeting began with the federal government reiterating its proposals. Two significant changes were added , however. First, Ottawa dropped the conditions attached to National Adjustment Grants (Canada, 1946: 386-387). And second, noting the provincial opposition to the idea of permanent constitutional loss of jurisdiction, the federal government proposed that its plan be entered into as a temporary three year agreement (Canada, 1946: 387-388).

Quebec responded by agreeing to the federal proposal in principle, re-emphasizing its insistence that the agreement be in effect only until the federal government had passed through the Reconstruction crisis. It suggested one specific alteration to the plan - that the federal government should not be allowed to apply corporate taxes to resource companies (Canada, 1946: 409-415). Quebec insisted that this agreement would in no way represent a provincial surrender of powers.

> ... we insist on an iron-clad guarantee that we are not giving away any rights of the province, but we are only renting some of them under very precise and definite conditions. This means that after the temporary agreement is over Ottawa has to get out the field in such a way that we can fully enjoy the taxing rights which are recognized to us by the Canadian Constitution (Canada, 1946: 557-558).

Alberta took much the same position as Quebec. It agreed to the idea of an interim arrangement with the federal government until Reconstruction was complete (Canada, 1946: 492). It stressed however, that this was not a concession of any of its powers to Ottawa. It was merely a voluntary rental of capacities. Alberta would maintain its complete independence in all fields of jurisdiction as outlined in the Constitution, and once the crisis was over there would have to be serious discussion of removing federal government encroachment into provincial fields of taxation (Canada, 1946: 489, 536). The conference concluded with an agreement in principle on the federal government's modified proposal. The provinces would await a detailed tax rental plan which would be forthcoming later in the 1946 federal budget. At that point the provinces would be approached for their official approval (to be discussed in the next chapter).

To summarize, Alberta and Quebec held similar positions on Ottawa's Reconstruction plan. Both opposed the original federal proposal for virtually identical reasons but later tentatively approved of the concept of a tax rental scheme under the mutual understanding that it did not represent a surrender of provincial power in any way. Once again, the notion of Quebec and Albertas' jurisdictional interests being at odds is absent from the events examined. Alberta, like Quebec, remained firm in its commitment to maintaining provincial jurisdictional integrity. Neither would agree to transfer permanently any jurisdictional powers to

Ottawa. However, persuaded that the task of Reconstruction warranted special, temporary arrangements, both governments agreed to consider the idea of a tax rental agreement similar to that implemented unilaterally by Ottawa in 1941. The temporary nature of this agreement left federal government ambitions unfulfilled. In contrast to Smiley's interpretation of events, Alberta had not become "habituated" to follow the centralist agenda as a result of the war. Additionally, unlike the reports of Mallory, Scott and Corry, Alberta had not returned to the typical pattern of behaviour these scholars attributed to all English-speaking governments - namely, to an acceptance of the centralist agenda - which Aberhart had supposedly interupted.[2] Manning's jurisdictional positions agreed with Aberhart's. On the jurisdictional question, Alberta, like Quebec, maintained a consistent anti-centralist bent during the Reconstruction conference.

Conclusion

Events between 1930 and 1945 demand several modifications to the conventional interpretation of Alberta and Quebec's jurisdictional interests. Like Quebec, apart from the desire to shed the costly expenditures associated with unemployment and pensions obligations, Alberta was opposed to the general notion of centralizing powers at Ottawa. When the federal government began to make a concerted effort to assume greater legislative authority, Alberta clearly resisted Ottawa's initiative. In fact, the intensity of Alberta's position was arguably greater than Quebec's if one considers that an effort to expand provincial powers is a more intense expression of the ambition to secure provincial jurisdiction than simply protecting it from federal takeover. Further, academic accounts argued that Aberhart's approach to federal-provincial relations represented an oddity in traditional Alberta government behaviour. Upon close scrutiny however, his jurisdictional positions did not appear to differ substantially with those of the Brownlee or Manning. Overall, unlike what is traditionally described, the substance of Alberta and Quebecs' jurisdictional concerns were not at odds between 1930 and 1945. Outside of pensions and unemployment responsibilities, both governments were committed to the principle of securing their legislative integrity and acted in a consistent manner towards this end.

Notes

1 From 1935 forward, the actual minutes of all Dominion-provincial conferences are available. Submissions made to these meetings by the federal and provincial governments frequently accompany the minutes.

2 Paradoxically, the administration following Aberhart's did not have a "typical," pre-1935 pattern of English-speaking government behaviour to return to seeing as Brownlee's jurisdictional positions were similar to those of Aberhart.

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3. Quebec-Alberta Interests Re-examined, 1946-1960

Introduction

Between 1946 and 1960 five intergovernmental conferences were convened. All but one were devoted to debates on federal-provincial fiscal arrangements. This debate included discussion on tax agreements and federal conditional spending on social programmes and economic development. The single conference which did not focus on the subject of fiscal arrangements was the constitutional meeting in January and September of 1950. As will be recalled, conventional academic wisdom described this period as the era of "cooperative federalism" - one in which English-speaking provinces were held to have acquiesced in "transactions with strongly centralizing effect" by transfering to Ottawa the responsibility for collecting important provincial taxes and by accepting conditional federal funding (Corry, 1958: 103).

This chapter is divided into six segments. The first deals with Quebec and Alberta positions at the 1950 constitutional conference. The second portion assesses the correspondence recorded between Ottawa and the provinces immediately following the Reconstruction conference. This correspondence set the tone for the positions which Quebec and Alberta would hold on tax arrangements throughout this period. The remaining four sections examine the fiscal conferences of 1950, 1955, 1957, and 1960.

The Constitutional Conference of 1950

The 1950 constitutional conference was held over two sessions - one in January and the other in September. The conference agenda dealt exclusively with the development of an amending procedure for the BNA Act. The opening address of Prime Minister St. Laurent at the first gathering outlined the details of the federal government's constitutional amendment of 1949 - the British North America (No. 2) Act. This legislation permitted the federal government to unilaterally amend the Constitution in all areas except (Canada, 1950a: 7):

i) Matters exclusively reserved for the provinces in the BNA Act.
ii) Any new powers that the provinces might secure after the amendment.
iii) Matters concerning schools.
iv) Matters pertaining to the use of English or French.
v) The stipulation that Parliament must sit once a year and that the federal government must call an election every five years (unless in the case of war).

After outlining the amendment, St. Laurent called upon the provinces to discuss developing a complete amending procedure for the BNA Act.

Quebec's opening address was short. Duplessis curtly declared that a simple discussion of an amending proceedure was not good-enough for his government. He insisted that the whole question of constitutional reform must be discussed and that

Ottawa's unilateral amendment of 1949 must also be placed on the agenda. He then proceeded to make it clear that he considered provincial governments to be the supreme order of authority in Canada, and accordingly, any potential amending procedure could not jeopardize Quebec's exclusive constitutional powers (Canada, 1950a: 15-17). Duplessis's second statement focussed upon Quebec's culturally distinct character within the federation and the consequent need to have that character preserved in any attempt at constitutional reform. He suggested that in order to preserve Quebec's special identity, constitutional reform needed to embody his contractual concept of Confederation. Consequently, all constitutional change at that time, or in the future, would have to be conditional on the approval of all provinces (Canada, 1950a: 51, 55).

Manning's opening address included the same topics of concern. He began with an attack on the federal government's constitutional amendment of 1949. According to Manning, the amendment was unsatisfactory. He had no objection to Ottawa having the power to amend areas of exclusive federal jurisdiction, but the 1949 legislation went beyond that. Ottawa had given itself unilaterally an exclusive amending capacity in areas of concurrent jurisdiction. In Alberta's opinion, this aspect of the federal amendment needed to be fully debated at the meeting (Canada, 1950a: 41-43). As well, Manning called for a wide-ranging discussion on constitutional reform in general. Separating debate over the process of changing the Constitution from the question of what specific changes were needed was deemed to be unacceptable. The BNA Act was held to be in need of drastic overhaul. Several examples of desired change were mentioned, such as: the abolition of the federal government's power to disallow or reserve provincial legislation; the clarification of fiscal responsibilities such that the provinces would have the necessary taxation rights to independently fulfil their obligations; and the establishment of a concurrent power in the field of immigration seeing as the provinces were responsible for providing the social support for immigrants to Canada (Canada, 1950a: 42-44).

Manning's second address emphasized that he would not consider the question of an amending procedure unless other governments were prepared to discuss the topic of wide-ranging constitutional reforms. He called for the immediate establishment of a conference sub-committee to discuss these reforms (Canada, 1950a: 60). As well, he gave specific support to Quebec's concern for the preservation of its distinct character. He held that all governments must unanimously approve of any constitutional amendment in order that the amendment could take effect. He believed that this "would provide the effect of a contract along the lines mentioned by the Premier of Quebec, and would take care of the very fundamental principles that he emphasized ..." (Canada, 1950a: 61). Finally, with regard to the 1949 federal amendment to the BNA Act, Manning pressed St. Laurent to guarantee to the members of the conference that the amendment did not give the federal government the right to alter unilaterally areas of concurrent jurisdiction. St. Laurent eventually provided this guarantee in principle (Canada, 1950a: 74-75).

The conference then created a sub-committee of Attorneys General to discuss the topic of an amending procedure. Essentially, the specific task of the group was to receive submissions from the provincial governments as to how they would categorize areas of the Constitution for amendment. In other words, the sub-committee was asked to define which orders of authority, and the consent of how many of them, would be needed to change the various sections of the BNA Act. The

sub-committee met and then reported its findings to the conference. Its report was as follows (Canada, 1950a: 93):

1. That the provisions of the BNA Act be divided under six headings:
   a) Areas of exclusive federal concern.
   b) Areas of exclusive provincial concern.
   c) Areas concerning Parliament and one or more, but not all, of the provinces.
   d) Areas concerning all provinces and Parliament.
   e) Areas of fundamental rights.
   f) Provisions that should be repealed.
2. Group (a) needs only Parliament's approval to amend
3. Group (b) needs only the approval of a provincial legislature to amend.
4. Group (c) needs Parliament's approval and all affected provinces to amend.
5. Group (d) needs Parliament and some percentage of provincial legislatures to amend.
6. Group (e) needs all provincial legislatures and Parliament to amend.
7. Amendments to group (c)-(e) may be initiated by any provincial legislature or Parliament.

The conference adjourned by agreeing to consider the sub-committee's report in more detail at the second session scheduled for September. Quebec withheld its support for the sub-committee report claiming that it needed more time to study the findings (Canada, 1950a: 96). Alberta stated that it would insist that the second session discuss the broader issue of constitutional reform, not simply the question of an amending procedure (Canada, 1950a: 102).

St. Laurent opened the second session with a brief address. He re-emphasized that the primary purpose of the conference was to develop an amending procedure for the BNA Act. He realized that Quebec wanted to pursue the topic of overall reform but he stressed that this conference was not the time or place to pursue such a matter (Canada, 1950b: 7). Interestingly, he did not mention Alberta alongside Quebec as a province that was insisting upon the theme of broad constitutional overhaul. Yet Alberta had been the most vocal government on this topic at the first session.

Duplessis' response to St. Laurent was, once more, curt. He insisted that the entire matter of constitutional reform must be addressed and that there was no better occasion for that than this conference (Canada, 1950b: 12). He was in favour of patriating the constitution but wanted large-scale reforms to take place alongside it. Again, he stressed that whatever was about to occur, Quebec would not jeopardize its constitutional powers (Canada, 1950b: 72).

Alberta, like Quebec, insisted that the wider issue of constitutional reform be placed on the agenda. Manning focussed particularly on the need for enhanced provincial fiscal powers.

> ... the constitution must not assign responsibility to a government ... without assigning at the same time to that government the necessary legal authority to discharge fully the legal responsibility that has been

> assigned. This feature of a constitution related particularly to its fiscal provisions as they relate to the responsibilities assigned particularly in the field of social services (Canada, 1950b: 37).

Once more Manning insisted that he was not willing to divorce consideration of an amending procedure from the topic of reform. He made the point that governments could not discuss the categorization of powers in an amending formula if they had not first determined which powers should belong to the two orders of government (Canada, 1950b: 38). He ended with the suggestion that a committee be struck to study the subject of redrafting the Constitution (Canada, 1950b: 39).

After all government statements had been made, Ontario suggested that the conference assemble into a committee of the whole to discuss the categorization of powers for the amending formula (Canada, 1950b: 53). Manning insisted that such a topic was too restrictive. Duplessis stressed that he agreed with Manning's protest and that the conference should follow the Alberta suggestion of discussing the subject of a full constitutional redraft (Canada, 1950b: 53). At this point the conference was at a deadlock between Alberta and Quebec's position on the one hand, and the rest of the governments wanting to focus on the amending procedure, on the other. Due to this deadlock the conference was forced to adjourn. The subject of the Constitution was then referred to the conference on fiscal relations in December. At that conference the subject of the Constitution was not discussed. The issue of constitutional reform was essentially put to rest for a decade.

To summarize, the substance of the concerns raised by Alberta and Quebec at this conference was literally identical. Both exhibited a dedication to the principle of maintaining provincial jurisdictional integrity in any amending procedure that might be developed. As well, Duplessis and Manning raised strong objections to the 1949 constitutional amendment. Though Ottawa was prepared to outline the amendment, it had not planned on debating its contents at the conference. And finally, Alberta and Quebec both wanted to discuss the need for sweeping constitutional reform. The breadth of their concerns went beyond what all other governments at the table were prepared to discuss at the time. Interestingly, Stevenson (1989: 240) makes the observation that the break-up of the conference was due to the intransigent positions of Quebec and Ontario. While Ontario did not fully cooperate with the federal government's desire to achieve a swift formula for amendment it was not responsible for blocking the federal objective. The report of the conference makes it clear that it was Alberta and Quebec's positions that scuttled the meeting. The Ontario Premier was not only willing to address the narrow question of an amending procedure; he insisted upon it.

Correspondence Following the Federal Tax Rental Proposal at Reconstruction: The Genesis of Positions on Tax Arrangements

The federal-provincial tax rental proposal presented by Ottawa at the Conference on Reconstruction was eventually formalized in the federal budget of June 27, 1946. This proposal became, thereafter, the subject of a great deal of correspondence between the two levels of government. Before the plan could be implemented for the targetted five-year period of 1947-1952, the federal government had to convince the provinces to accept it.

There were only two changes made to the original federal proposal put forth at Reconstruction: Ottawa would share occupation in the field of succession duties if the provinces so wished, and it offered to add an escalator clause to its annual rental payments to the provinces. This clause would allow for payments to rise each year according to a formula which would combine increases in national income with each province's rise in population (Canada, 1947: 65).

In his first of only two short letters to the federal government, Duplessis informed Ottawa on June 28, 1946 that he was studying the formal federal proposal (Canada, 1947: 26). The letter stated that Quebec's offer at the Reconstruction Conference to consider the agreement "on a fair and constitutional basis always stands" (Canada, 1947: 26). At that conference Quebec had agreed in principle to the tax rental concept. Given that Ottawa's formal proposal was very similar to what had been discussed at the Reconstruction meeting, there seems to be adequate grounds to suspect that Quebec was still leaning towards entering into the 1947-1952 tax agreement. There was no more correspondence from Quebec until shortly before the final agreement was to be signed in March 1947. In the meantime the federal government made a revised offer on January 25, 1947. The new offer consisted of a federal government pledge to completely vacate the minor tax field on gasoline, and it put forth a third option for calculating tax-rental payments to the provinces (in addition to the two offered at the Reconstruction Conference). Ottawa offered a formula by which it would pay each province $12.75 per capita of its 1942 population plus fifty per cent of each province's tax receipts from income and corporation taxes in 1940 (Canada, 1947: 65-66). In response to the revised federal offer, Quebec's second letter, issued just eight weeks before the targetted signing date, merely stated that Quebec's intention had not changed from that expressed in its first letter (Canada, 1947: 26). It would continue to study the proposal.

Alberta, in contrast to Quebec, presented the federal government with a long list of specific concerns. Its immediate reaction to the federal budget proposal came in the form of a short memorandum. In it the Alberta government rejected Ottawa's offer out of hand. It insisted that any acceptable agreement must guarantee specifically that: provincial jurisdictional powers would not be diminished in any way; the targetted revenues for the provinces would be listed as an irreducible minimum; and any province which did not wish to participate in the federal-provincial scheme "must not have their constitutional right to levy taxes impaired by the federal government" (Alberta, 1946b: 1-2). Manning's first letter to the federal government in response to the budget was written on July 11, 1946, and, once again, Alberta stated specifically that it would withhold its approval of the offer until its concerns were addressed (Canada, 1947: 56). Three new concerns were raised in the letter. First, Alberta wanted the federal government to guarantee that federal financial assistance to the provinces for social services would continue (most notably for unemployment, pensions and health) and that public investment would also be continued. The 1946 federal budget made no mention of these payments, yet they had been specifically mentioned by Ottawa at the Reconstruction Conference. Second, it wanted to know what the federal rates of taxation would be in the three standard fields that Ottawa wanted the provinces to vacate. The value of these fields to the provinces depended on what rate of taxation the federal government was intending to apply to them. Alberta claimed that it needed this information before it decided to re-enter the tax fields or not (Canada, 1947: 57).

And finally, Alberta insisted that it should have the right to terminate the agreement on March 31 of any year, provided it gave thirty days notice (Canada, 1946a: 57).

A second memorandum listing additional concerns was issued by the Alberta government around this time. In it the province suggested that a specific clause be put into the agreement that would make it obligatory for the federal government to consult the provinces should it consider the formation of any new social programmes (Alberta, 1946a: 3). As well, and different from the third demand outlined in the July 11 letter to Ottawa, Alberta called for the right of any province to terminate the agreement after three years (Alberta, 1946a: 3). And finally, it suggested that a permanent federal-provincial committee be established to study tax arrangements on an ongoing basis (Alberta, 1946a: 3).

The federal Minister of Finance replied on July 15 to the Alberta letter of four days earlier. In it he stated that: federal assistance to the provinces for social services and public investment would take place according to the details determined at the Reconstruction Conference; Ottawa could not predict its tax rate five years in advance; and he would prefer to have only one termination date for the agreement - that being, five years from the point of signing (Canada, 1947: 58).

In answer to the federal government, Manning wrote on October 8, that there should be a full-scale federal-provincial conference to debate the proposed agreement (Canada, 1947: 59). Ottawa responded that it wanted a significant number of provinces to agree to its proposals before it would call a meeting (Canada, 1947: 61). In his last letter to Ottawa before the agreement was signed, Manning responded to the revised federal proposal of January, 1947. While upset at the federal government's refusal to call a formal federal-provincial conference, Alberta approved of Ottawa's offer to withdraw from the area of gasoline taxes. It also stated that it was leaning towards consenting to the federal offer (Canada, 1947: 62). Manning had come to consider the arrangement in a positive light based on his conclusion that what was being proposed by the federal government did not violate the constitutional rights of the provinces with regard to their taxation powers (Canada, 1947: 63). While Manning chastised Ottawa for not providing enough attention to his province's jurisdictional concerns, he concluded that "we do feel that it is possible ... to safeguard the constitutional rights of the provinces" in the proposed agreement (Canada, 1947: 63). He ended this final letter of correspondence, however, by insisting that the federal-provincial tax agreement was viewed by Alberta as only a temporary method by which his province would finance its operations. He maintained that federal-provincial harmony on fiscal matters would not be possible until formal changes were made to the Constitution allowing for the provinces to raise independently an adequate amount of revenues to support their expensive jurisdictional responsibilities. Essentially, Manning was calling for enhanced provincial taxation rights in relation to the federal government. In Manning's words,

> We feel ... that the agreements at present under consideration will at best be but temporary arrangements. We are convinced that the problem of Dominion-Provincial relations cannot be solved until there is a complete clarification and, if necessary, redefining of the rights and responsibilities of the Dominion and Provincial Governments and until each of these Governments is assured adequate revenues under its own jurisdiction to discharge fully its constitutional responsibilities and

> provide adequately for the needs of its people. Obviously the proposed temporary agreement does not meet these requirements which we regard as fundamental to a satisfactory and permanent solution to this problem (Canada, 1947: 63).

In the end, Alberta was the last province to join the 1947-1952 tax rental agreement (Burns, 1980: 80) while Quebec (and Ontario) remained outside of it. Provincial members of the agreement withheld levying personal income and corporation income taxes and they completely vacated the field of succession duties. In return the provinces could choose to accept compensation by way of one of the two rental formulas offered at the Reconstruction Conference - namely, rental payments based on a per capita basis, or payments based on past revenue yields in each province's vacated tax fields. Alberta preferred the first option (Canada, 1947: 62). Citizens of those provinces remaining outside of the agreement were offered a five per cent deduction from the federal personal income and corporate tax as well as a fifty per cent rebate on federal succesion duties. The total amount of revenues represented by these rebates approximated the proportionate amount that the federal government would transfer to the provinces party to the rental agreement. Subsequently, Ontario and Quebec imposed their own succession and corporate taxes within these federal parameters and collected them independently of Ottawa (Stevenson, 1989: 133). Neither implemented an income tax and, consequently, collected less revenues that they would have received had they joined the tax agreement (Burns, 1980: 81).

Quebec's official announcement of its decision not to participate in the agreement came in its provincial budget addresss of March 25, 1947 - six days before the federal-provincial agreement was to commence. In that address Quebec Treasurer, Onésime Gagnon, stated:

> [Trans.] The present policy of the federal government is, in fact, contrary to the spirit of Confederation .... At the present time, there is no doubt that if the ... [agreement] were implemented, the economic and and political future of the provinces would be seriously compromised. The provinces need their sources of income in order to meet their obligations. The best internal policy for Canada would be to favour the provinces in every possible way , so that they might be allowed the full exercise of their rights and complete fulfilment of their obligations (Quebec, 1957, vol. 1: 148).

In essence, Duplessis' government held that the agreement would diminish permanently the jurisdictional integrity of the provinces (Quebec, 1957: 146). By allowing Ottawa to be the single collector of revenues, the provinces would surrender their legal control of taxing powers to the federal authority (Quebec, 1957, vol. 1: 146-148). The unconditional cash payments that the federal government was obligated to give to the provinces as rental for its exclusive occupation of the three tax fields were not considered to detract from Quebec's new position. Having to accept payments from another government insinuated dependency on that government for financial survival. According to Herbert Quinn,

> Duplessis ... argued that if the provincial government should ever become dependent on federal grants rather that on its own tax resources for the financing of its day-to-day activities, the ultimate result would be complete domination and the end of provincial autonomy. The reason behind this contention was that any governmental authority which makes a grant of money is bound sooner or later to lay down the conditions under which such money is to be spent (1979: 116).

For Quebec, the task of the provinces should have been one of seeking full financial autonomy from the federal government. Essentially, this entailed seeking an increase in provincial taxation powers in excess of current capabilities. This would ultimately enable the provinces to financially meet their extensive jurisdictional obligations independently of Ottawa (Quebec, 1957, vol. 1: 145, 181 and vol. 2, book 2: 295-296).

In summarizing these events, it is critical to keep in mind one of the questions posed at the outset of Chapter Two - that being: To what extent did the objectives of Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional positions differ or agree? While it is immediately obvious that Alberta and Quebec's policies concerning the tax rental agreement differed, the interests behind those policies were congruous. According to conventional wisdom, participation in the tax rental scheme was an expression of submission to federal government dominance. This general measure however, obscured the content of Alberta's position which was in greater harmony with Quebec's jurisdictional outlook than that of the federal government.

Quebec rejected the tax agreements on the premise that they negatively affected provincial autonomy by making this level of authority permanently dependent upon Ottawa in order to raise the revenues required for provincial legislative obligations.[1] It argued for a re-adjustment of taxation powers in order to give the provinces the independent ability to raise their required funds. Quebec's decision to remain outside of the agreements, however, did not give it financial capabilities beyond those of the participating provinces. Its citizens were granted federal rebates roughly equivalent to the total per capita rental payments that were given to the participating provinces. Consequently, Quebec could impose its own taxes only to the limit of these federal rebates. In fact, by choosing not to institute an income tax Quebec collected less revenue than it would have received in the tax rental scheme.

Quebec's position did, however, lead to the construction of a separate provincial tax collection system. While this initiative did not give Quebec more taxing powers or revenues than its provincial counterparts, it did create a unique symbolic protest against its lack of financial autonomy. One may plausibly argue that this symbolism was evidence of a greater intensity on Quebec's part to secure its jurisdictional autonomy (much in the same manner as Alberta's desire to expand upon its powers in the 1930's was a more intense expression of a resolve to secure provincial jurisdictional integrity than was Quebec's approach to simply defending the status quo).

Alberta, in contrast to Quebec, viewed federal-provincial tax agreements as temporary in nature, and as in no way affecting the ultimate control of its jurisdictional prerogatives. It repeated this viewpoint on several occasions. Like Quebec, Alberta argued for formal changes to the agreements, and to the Constitution, in order to clarify taxing powers and enable provincial governments to

collect all revenues which they needed independently of Ottawa. In the meantime however, it elected to accept the tax agreements as interim methods of financing its operations. Only if participation in the tax agreements had sacrificed provincial fiscal powers, and the goal of provincial economic autonomy, could it be claimed that Alberta had strayed from its commitment to the maintenance of jurisdictional integrity or that it was demonstrating acceptance of a centralization of powers at Ottawa. By agreeing to the scheme however, no such sacrifice was made by Alberta. Each participating province remained in ultimate control of its taxing powers which it volunteered to temporarily rent to Ottawa in return for payments.

If Quebec's decision to remain outside of the tax agreements demonstrated a greater passion than Alberta in their shared displeasure with the fiscal status quo, this did not create conflict between the two provinces. On this point, it is essential to take note of the fact that Alberta argued for the right of Quebec to follow the path that it did before Quebec had reached its decision to do so. While not opting for the Quebec approach, Alberta had insisted that any province outside of the federal-provincial agreements should be able to collect their own taxes free from federal government interference.

In short, the act of joining the tax agreements or not was a poor measure to compare the substance of Alberta and Quebec's jurisdictional interests. Agreeing to the tax rental scheme or not, both Quebec and Alberta were left with the same taxation rights and the same inability to fulfil their legislative obligations independently of Ottawa. Consequently, both argued for a realignment of the Constitution to enable provinces to acquire the necessary rights of taxation required to function without federal participation. Alberta had made it clear that its participation in the tax rental scheme was only a temporary method of dealing with the financial question. Full provincial financial independence was necessary before Alberta would be content. Both governments pursued this objective, and neither compromised it by participating, or not participating, in the tax rental arrangement.

The 1950 Conference on Fiscal Matters: Negotiating the 1952-1957 Agreement

A short federal-provincial conference in December, 1950 was called by Ottawa to address the subject of developing a new tax agreement to replace the one due to expire in 1952. As well, the federal government wished to discuss the topic of social security (specifically, the potential for conditional health care payments to the provinces and a federal takeover of pensions responsibility).

Ottawa's opening statement outlined these two agenda items. Regarding fiscal arrangements, St. Laurent proposed that a new tax agreement for the 1952-1957 period be developed along the same lines as the previous arrangement. In the new agreement the federal government proposed that the rental payments to the provinces be increased to reflect current levels of gross national product and provincial population (Canada, 1953: 7). Concerning social security, St. Laurent proposed that the provinces consider the idea of making the necessary constitutional amendment to allow Ottawa to assume full responsibility for pensions. As well, he indicated that the federal government was considering the idea of transfering payments to the provinces for health responsibilities. He insisted, however, that no formal plans had been developed by the federal government for the health and pensions schemes and that he merely wanted to discuss the potential for such arrangements in the future (Canada, 1953: 8-9).

Duplessis' address to the meeting was brief. Regarding the tax rental agreement, he simply stated that he was firmly opposed to even discussing the concept. He insisted that provinces must ultimately have the independent capacity to raise all funds needed for their constitutional obligations. He did mention however, that Quebec would be willing to consider the social security questions posed by St. Laurent but that he wanted to see firm proposals from Ottawa before commiting himself to any federal goals (Canada, 1953: 26-28).

Manning's statement was comprehensive. Like Quebec, Alberta held that the Constitution must be re-organized to give each level of government the independent capacities to finance their responsibilities (Canada, 1953: 53-54). To Alberta, the tax agreements were deemed to be only temporary, patch-work solutions to the fiscal problems of the provinces. Federal-provincial fiscal relations would remain unsettled until the provinces received increased financial powers (Canada, 1953: 54). As well, he repeated once more that by agreeing to the tax rental scheme Alberta would not be surrendering the ultimate legal control of its jurisdiction (Canada, 1953: 54) and:

> If that premise is accepted it follows logically that if, in the interest of our nation, because of unusual circumstances, it is desireable to give to the federal government the exclusive use of certain fields of revenue, then the compensation to the provinces for vacating those fields must [therefore] never be regarded on the basis of charity (Canada, 1953: 54).

Manning insisted that if any new agreement was to be pursued along the lines of the old one, it must embody a formula whereby the full tax potential of each province's fields of revenue would be recognized in their payments received from Ottawa (Canada, 1953: 54). He finished by agreeing to consider the social security ideas put forth by the federal government.

To summarize, the conference ended with no firm proposal for a new tax agreement. The details were to be worked out later between the federal government and the individual provinces. It was apparent however, that Quebec would not participate. While Alberta and Québec chose different positions regarding the tax rental scheme, once again neither compromised their provincial fiscal powers. Quebec remained committed to remaining outside of such schemes, but agreed with Alberta on the more important issue of reforming the current legal jurisdiction of the provinces to provide this level of government with the fiscal powers needed to raise all of its required revenues independently of Ottawa. As well, both provinces were willing to consider Ottawa's health and pensions ideas.

In 1951, the federal government secured the constitutional amendment needed for it to assume enhanced pensions responsibility. There was no objection from any of the provinces. According to Quebec's Tremblay Commission Report,

> Of all the amendments to the Constitution made during recent years, this was the only one which did not result, in short, in a lessening of the jurisdictional autonomy of the provinces and the only one to be obtained through a process of harmonious agreement (1957, vol. 1: 167).

On the issue of conditional health care payments to the provinces no firm proposal was drafted by Ottawa after the conference. The matter was to be discussed at subsequent meetings. At this point, both provinces appeared willing to consider the idea.

The tax rental agreement that was signed in 1952 by all provinces except Quebec, embodied the following details: All participating provinces except Ontario refrained from levying personal income taxes, corporate taxes, and succession duties (Ontario continued to levy succession duties). In return the provinces received rental payments as before, but they were adjusted upwards according to a formula which included current GNP per capita related to each province's population. This meant that the richer provinces would receive more than the poorer provinces. As a result, the poorer provinces would receive a guaranteed minimum payment regardless of the actual revenue yields of their vacated tax fields. Consequently, this is held to have given birth to the concept of "have not" provinces (Van Loon and Whittington, 1981: 286).

The 1955 Conference on Fiscal Matters: Negotiating the 1957-1962 Agreement

The next federal-provincial conference was held in 1955. The meeting was divided into two sessions, one in April (to set the agenda) and the other in October. Once again, the principal reason for the meeting was to discuss the proposition of a new tax agreement.

Prior to entering into an account of the conference proceedings, it is necessary to provide details of Quebec's implementation of a provincial income tax in 1954. In February of that year the Quebec government passed the Quebec Income Tax Act. The Act stipulated that over the following three years Quebec would levy a personal income tax amounting to fifteen per cent of the federal tax in the same field. This went outside of the five per cent corridor allotted by Ottawa and stood to allow Quebec to earn proportionately more income tax revenues than the other provinces. Nevertheless, the Quebec government insisted that its taxpayers receive a full fifteen per cent deduction of the provincial tax from the federal tax (Kwavnick, 1973: 150). The federal government replied in its budget address of the same year that it would not allow such a deduction. After subsequent negotiations between the two governments, however, the federal government permitted an increase in Quebec's income tax room, but limited it to ten per cent of the federal levy (Kwavnick, 1973: 151). Quebec was not pleased with the ten per cent rate (Quebec, 1957, vol. 1: 153), but, nevertheless, it consented to the federal stipulation. In January 1955, the federal government offered the same arrangement that it had struck with Quebec to all other provinces (Stevenson, 1989: 134). It would increase federal rental payments to the provinces to a level matching Quebec's tax room, or provinces were free to withdraw from the current tax agreement to collect their own provincial income tax under the same conditions arranged with Quebec. In essence, under this new income tax plan, both Quebec and Alberta received or collected proportionately equal income tax revenues. While Alberta did not opt for the Quebec arrangement, it will be remembered that Alberta had insisted in 1947 that any province wishing to charge its own taxes in any of the three standard fields should be entitled to do so. Long before Quebec had imposed its tax, Alberta had approved of such a move should Quebec have desired to do so.

The federal government opened the preliminary April meeting by outlining the Quebec-Ottawa income tax arrangement and by offering it as an option to all provincial governments in the upcoming tax rental agreement. It proposed two agenda items for the conference in October - those being, a future tax agreement for the period of 1957-1962, and a federal plan to contribute unemployment relief funds to the provinces (Canada, 1955a: 10-13). Regarding this second agenda item, the federal government was not proposing a change to the Constitution. It was only suggesting that it contribute funds to the provinces to administer in this area. St. Laurent suggested that if a province's unemployment figure surpassed a certain percentage (to be determined later) of the national level, the federal government would pay for forty percent of the overall provincial costs of attending to expenses in this area (Canada, 1955a:14).

Duplessis' remarks were extremely brief. His comments seemed to pertain to the tax agreement only. He said quite simply,

> I have always believed in the old saying, "Actions speak louder than words"; accordingly my remarks will be brief. I may state right now that the views of the Province of Quebec are so clear, so consistent, and so much based on common sense, that it is useless to repeat them (Canada, 1955a: 22).

Manning's address was comprehensive. He began by expressing support for the federal initiative with regard to unemployment. He then continued by suggesting that additional items should be placed on the agenda - those being: municipal government financing requirements; public health and welfare; the abolition of conditional federal grants to the provinces; and the possibility for increased provincial control of immigration (Canada, 1955a: 52). With reference to a potential tax rental agreement for 1957, Alberta re-asserted the position it had voiced at previous conferences. The tax rental scheme was only considered to be an interim solution to provincial financial needs (Canada, 1955a: 53). Manning stressed that he wanted any future rental payment formula to include recognition of the potential value of the tax fields rented to the federal government. In Manning's words,

> When you rent a property it is usually assumed that the revenue value of that property has some direct relationship to what is considered its fair rental value. Under the present formula where the amount of payments to the provinces relates only to population and variation in the gross national product, while there is fluctuation in the revenue producing value of the fields rented, this factor does not enter into the formula at all (Canada, 1955a: 53).

And finally, Manning made the suggestion that the question of broad constitutional reform should once again be placed on the agenda. The suspension of the last constitutional conference in 1950 was a disappointment to Alberta. If the topic could not be covered in the fall meeting, then it was suggested that the federal government should call a special meeting on the matter as soon as possible. According to Manning, the clarification of financial powers between the two levels of government that he had repeatedly called for over the past several years should

be settled once and for all (Canada, 1955a: 55). After all governments had made their statements the conference adjourned until October.

The October session opened with the federal government commenting on a long list of discussion topics that it had compiled from the spring meeting. St. Laurent began by offering a more concrete proposal for provincial unemployment relief. Ottawa suggested that it would pay fifty percent of provincial expenses put toward assisting the unemployed not qualifying for insurance in provinces that had a level of unemployment which exceeded 0.45 per cent of its total population (Canada, 1955b: 9). The issue of a federal hospital insurance programme was also introduced. While it did not have a proposal at this time (as was the case when it put forth the idea of a national health plan in 1950) Ottawa wanted to open the floor for discussion on the topic. Ottawa emphasized that it had no intention of intruding upon provincial jurisdiction by proposing such an issue for debate (Canada, 1955b: 10). The federal government continued with the suggestion that the conference establish a committee of officials to study ongoing federal-provincial fiscal relations (Canada, 1955b: 11).

On this subject of fiscal relations, Ottawa had two objectives. It wanted to establish common ground for a new tax agreement for 1957, and it wanted to ensure a secure source of revenue for the poorer provinces in this new agreement (Canada, 1955b: 12). St. Laurent made the observation that many provinces that were party to the current agreement were unsatisfied with it. He noted that some provinces (like Alberta) viewed the agreements as only a "stop-gap" measure of financing their obligations, and that they were ideally in search of independent revenue sources (Canada, 1955b: 16). With this in mind, St. Laurent suggested that if any province wished to re-enter any of the three standard tax fields he would seek to work this into the new agreement. According to the federal government, such an offer made it perfectly "clear that [by joining the tax agreements] there has been no sacrifice of constitutional rights", and if the provinces chose to accept this offer, "there would be less likelihood than under ... [the current] five-year rental plan of confused belief that somehow the federal government is limiting the revenues of the provinces" (Canada, 1955b: 17).

Quebec's remarks to the conference were lengthy. Duplessis opened by re-emphasizing his objection to the notion of a tax rental agreement with the federal government. Contrary to Alberta's opinion, Duplessis continued to assert that the tax agreements somehow surrendered the ultimate control of provincial taxation powers to Ottawa in return for federal subsidies (Canada, 1955b: 36-39). Ultimately, Quebec sought to collect its taxes free of interference from Ottawa. A constitutional solution was therefore necessary to clarify just how far each government could tax in their respective fields, and ideally give each level of government the independent taxing powers needed to fully meet their constitutional responsibilities (Canada, 1955b: 40).

While Duplessis made no specific reference to the subject of federal conditional spending (which Alberta had insisted be put on the agenda at the April session), his Treasurer, Onésime Gagnon, had made specific reference to the matter just prior to the meeting. Gagnon stated that Quebec was opposed to such federal spending funds because it influenced provincial priorities in areas of social policy and public investment. This was held to be a federal invasion into exclusive fields of provincial jurisdiction (Gagnon, 1955: 13). While refusing to accept two of the programmes initiated by Ottawa (grants to universities and money for building the Trans-Canada

Highway), Quebec did, however, choose to accept all other revenues of this type (Quebec, 1957, vol. 1: 175-180).

Manning's statement began with comments on the upcoming tax agreement in 1957. If a similar agreement to the one currently in place was to be pursued, Alberta re-emphasized its view that the formula used to calculate payments to the provinces should be restructured to reflect the potential value of the tax fields rented to Ottawa (Canada, 1955b: 92). Manning then introduced an entirely new idea on how taxes should be collected. The details of the plan were put forth in a memorandum that the Alberta government appears to have circulated just prior to the meeting:

> The term "Rental Agreement" implies a basis for income tax which is no longer adviseable or agreeable. It has been made quite plain that [all] governments ... recognize the rights of the Provincial Governments to re-enter the income tax on whatever basis the Provincial Government may find necessary or appropriate .... Under these conditions the logical conclusion would be to replace the present tax rental agreements by a system of Federal-Provincial taxes to include personal income tax, corporate income tax and succession duties; these taxes to be levied under authority of uniform taxing statutes of the Federal Government and the agreeing provinces .... [T]ax forms would clearly indicate what the tax levies were on behalf of the Federal Government and the provinces (Alberta, 1955: 1).

As well, under this new scheme the levels of taxation that each government would charge would be determined by their respective financial needs (Alberta, 1955: 1). In essence, provincial governments would be totally independent of the federal government in raising revenues for their constitutional obligations.

To the government of Alberta, this new proposal had many advantages over the existing system of tax collection (Canada, 1955b: 93). First and foremost, it would create provincial financial independence. This new plan would also allow for the potential value of tax fields to be reflected in the revenues received by the province, and at the same time, eliminate all forms of double taxation. And finally, Alberta stressed that this proposal stood to relieve the federal government of the political burden of being the primary tax collector in Canada. Alberta was prepared to accept this political responsibility if it was to obtain its own separate right to tax directly according to its needs (Alberta, 1955: 1). Regarding the federal government's preoccupation with enabling the poorer provinces to obtain a reasonable level of revenues, Alberta added that all provinces whose tax revenues exceeded the national average in this scheme would, along with Ottawa, contribute to a national tax stabilization fund which would be divided amongst the "have not" provinces (Alberta, 1955: 2). In short, Alberta was proposing a system of taxation that was comparable to the Quebec-Ottawa income tax arrangement, but included the fields of corporation taxes and succession duties as well. The only difference between the two plans was that Alberta's would use the federal tax collecting machinery and Quebec's would not.

With reference to federal conditional spending, Alberta exhibited the same general attitude as Quebec. While prepared to accept payments under the current

reality, it was opposed to the concept in general (Canada, 1955b: 95). In its memorandum, the Alberta government stated,

> The various conditional grants at present being paid to the provinces work disadvantageously to the provinces .... By their very nature conditional grants restrict the policies of the provinces in the fields which are and should be the sole responsibility of the provinces and their creatures, the municipalities. It is therefore proposed with a few designated exceptions these conditional grants be discontinued and that in their stead appropriate provisions be made in the percentage of Federal-Provincial taxes alloted to the provinces (Alberta, 1955: 4).

Alberta ended its presentation to the conference by indicating that its comments on the new federal proposal for hospital insurance would be forthcoming only after Ottawa had a formal plan in place (Canada, 1955b: 96). No comments were made by Alberta on the issue of federal assistance for unemployment.

To summarize, the debate at this conference continued to demonstrate similar jurisdictional interests between Alberta and Quebec. Both focussed their attention on conditional federal spending and tax agreements. While Alberta opted to join the eventual tax agreement in 1957 and Quebec did not, both governments maintained strong commitments in principle to the notion of greater provincial financial independence. These similar commitments were to be found in Alberta's new proposal for tax collection, and in Quebec's desire to redraft the Constitution in order to enhance provincial taxing powers.

The point has been made (Eggleston, 1947: 8 and Van Loon and Whittington, 1981: 286) that by consenting to the original tax agreement in 1947, participating provinces gained the benefit of receiving revenue from their tax sources but did not have to bear the political brunt of being the tax collector. Therefore, Quebec (like Ontario), by exposing its citizens to clearly defined provincial taxation, was taking the political risk of being a tax collector. Once again, on the issue of symbolism, one might argue that Alberta was less passionate toward its goal of financial independence by way of the fact that it was not willing to accept the political burden which came along with that goal. This potential gap between Alberta and Quebec's intensity, however, was eliminated at this meeting when Alberta called for a federal-provincial tax collecting scheme that would show all taxes going toward provincial government purposes.

On the matter of conditional grants, both were open to accepting some of the grants under current conditions, but were opposed in principle to the grants' influence on provincial decision making. Up until this conference, neither Quebec nor Alberta had made specific comments on federal conditional spending. At this meeting both declared that they wanted this form of spending abolished, and that it should be replaced with increased provincial taxing capacities. Alberta in no way insisted upon an expansion of this form of federal funding as Corry had argued.

It is important to mention however, that Alberta accepted all of Ottawa's conditional funds and that Quebec did not. Of the dozens of federally-inspired conditional programmes in place, Quebec refused to accept highway construction and university grants (Stevenson, 1989: 163).[2] In doing so, Duplessis, unlike Manning, sheltered provincial policy areas from federal influence. One might argue that Alberta's policy represents a significant degree of capitulation to the centralist

cause which Duplessis was not willing to do. However, given that Quebec accepted all but two of the federal programmes, this argument cannot be carried too far.[3] As was the case with Duplessis' policy on tax agreements, his position with regard to these two conditionally funded programmes might best be understood in symbolic terms - signifying a greater intensity than Manning in their mutual opposition to this form of funding.

Between this conference and the conference of 1957, the provinces (minus Quebec) and the federal government formalized yet another tax agreement for the period of 1957-1962. The details of the plan were as follows: For vacating the standard fields of taxation, Ottawa would pay the provinces ten per cent of the federal income tax collected in each province, nine per cent of corporation profits and fifty per cent of its succession duties. For any province wishing to collect its own taxes, the federal government would vacate the designated fields by these same percentages. Only Ontario accepted Ottawa's offer by not vacating the corporate or succession fields of taxation. The plan also provided for the first unconditional equalization payments to the poorer provinces as well as for stabilization grants. Quebec, incidently, elected to accept the equalization payments. Regarding the matter of unemployment, the federal government began providing funds to the provinces along the lines that it had proposed at the meeting of 1955 (Van Loon and Whittington, 1981: 286-289).

The 1957 Conference on Fiscal Matters: Re-opening the 1957-1962 Package

In November 1957, shortly after taking office, Prime Minister Diefenbaker convened a federal-provincial conference for yet another discussion on fiscal arrangements and social security. No new tax agreement was due for another five years but Diefenbaker was willing to discuss any desired changes to the one that was in place. The federal government had only one change in mind to the agreement - that being, the establishment of a special fund to aid the Atlantic provinces in their economic development (Canada, 1957: 9, 12). Regarding social security, the federal government declared that it wished to implement a cost-shared hospital insurance programme and that it was not prepared to wait for provincial approval (Canada, 1957: 10). And finally, on the issue of federal unemployment assistance to the provinces, Diefenbaker offered to remove the 0.45 per cent threshold that had been established in 1955 (Canada, 1957: 12).

Duplessis opened with a statement to the effect that he hoped the new federal government would pursue a different, and more flexible, approach to intergovernmental relations than the one chosen by the governments of St. Laurent (Canada, 1957: 105). He then proceeded to give the same speech, word for word, that he had made at the fall 1955 meeting (Canada, 1957: 19-27).

Manning granted his approval in principle to the federal government's desire to establish a special fund to promote economic development in the Atlantic provinces. He then re-affirmed once more his contention that his participation in the tax agreements was only a temporary act until the provinces could establish an independent mode of raising all funds for their operations, and that this participation had not sacrificed any provincial fiscal rights to Ottawa.

> It has always been our understanding that the present tax rental agreements were neither proposed or accepted as complete or

> permanent solutions .... From their inception under the stress of wartime emergency, we have regarded them in the nature of temporary and interim arrangements which have been extended from time to time with only minor adjustments. We have accepted them for being exactly what the name implied - Tax Rental Agreements - under which no province surrendered any part of its constitutional right to those fields of taxation which it vacated voluntarily and temporarily under the terms of the agreements (Canada, 1957: 93).

According to Manning, the 1957-1962 agreement remained unsatisfactory because it did not recognize the potential revenue value of the tax fields that the provinces rented to Ottawa (Canada, 1957: 93). In essence, the overarching problem was that the provinces were simply not receiving sufficient money from the agreement (either through rental payments or equalization grants) to carry out their obligations. This in turn was putting the provinces at the mercy of federal government conditional financing. It was unacceptable to Alberta that it had to rely upon funds with which the federal government could influence policy making in fields of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. Alberta called for a reform of the tax rental system to abolish altogether the need for provincial dependency on conditional payments from Ottawa.

> ... it is our contention that a more desireable procedure would be to increase the financial resources of the provinces sufficiently to enable them to discharge their own responsibilities [independently of the federal government]. This would be done by adopting a formula that would increase provincial revenue under a new tax rental agreement by an aggregate amount equal to what the federal government would otherwise spend on social services in the province ... or, by the federal government vacating certain tax fields in favour of the provinces or a combination of both. (Canada, 1957: 94).

Better yet, Manning recommended that all governments at the conference re-consider Alberta's idea of a joint federal-provincial tax scheme. This would both eliminate the need for conditional grants altogether, and achieve Alberta's ultimate goal of complete financial independence from Ottawa (Canada, 1957: 95).

The conference ended with Diefenbaker agreeing to consider the provincial positions concerning fiscal arrangements. As well, the federal government promised to immediately remove the threshold it had placed on unemployment assistance to the provinces. And finally, all governments agreed on the need for special assistance for Atlantic economic development. Surprisingly, the subject of hospital insurance did not reach the floor for discussion.

To summarize, Quebec and Alberta continued to maintain similar goals. Both repeated their desire for increased financial capacities and both argued for the abolition of conditional federal spending (although strangely, they did not address the topic of hospital insurance in their speeches).

Between this meeting and the next intergovernmental gathering in 1960, three changes were made to the federal-provincial tax agreement. In 1958, the federal government raised the provincial revenue share of the income tax field to thirteen percent. As well, Quebec, under Paul Sauvé, worked out an arrangement with the

federal government to secure funding for its universities. Up until this point, Quebec was the only province not receiving federal funds for its universities. Duplessis had refused to accept the federal grants based on the fact that they were earmarked for the exclusive provincial jurisdiction of education. Sauvé reversed this policy (Wilson, 1959: 4). Instead of receiving the conditional payments from Ottawa, however, Quebec proposed to occupy the field of corporation taxes by a further one per cent. Any funds that Quebec obtained above and beyond what it would have otherwise received through federal grants were to be returned to Ottawa (Wilson, 1959: 4). After accepting this proposal, the federal government then offered the same arrangement to all other provinces in place of the conditional payments they were receiving at the time. Only Quebec chose the new plan. This, according to Van Loon and Whittington (1981: 288) established the first notion of an "opting out" clause in federal-provincial cost-shared programmes. This arrangement with Quebec gave it no greater university funding than the other provinces, nor did it give Quebec any jurisdictional advantage over the other provinces. Essentially, the only difference was that Quebec would collect these funds on its own. Once again, a symbolic gesture against the fiscal status quo seemed behind the Quebec's opting-out decision. And finally, Ottawa implemented the large conditional hospital insurance programme through the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Act. All provinces joined the programme. (Canada, 1960: 11).

The 1960 Conference on Fiscal Matters: Negotiating the 1962-1967 Agreement

The federal-provincial conference of July, 1960 was called for the primary purpose of discussing a tax agreement for the period of 1962-1967. Other secondary topics for discussion at the meeting included the issues of health insurance; federal conditional funding to the provinces; public investment; unemployment; and the matter of municipal government financing.

The federal government opened its formal statement to the conference with a complaint of its own about the tax agreements. The political burden of being the primary tax collector in Canada was becoming an irritant to Ottawa. In Diefenbakers's words: "I think that it is fair to say that to some extent these agreements have transferred the interests of provincial Premiers and their treasurers from their own taxpayers to the federal treasury, and that from a federal standpoint I need not add this has its disadvantages" (Canada, 1960: 9). Accordingly, Diefenbaker expressed that he had no objection to provinces beginning to collect their own taxes. His only stipulation was that in any agreement reached the concept of equalization payments would have to be maintained (Canada, 1960: 10). Regarding conditional payments and cost-shared programmes, Diefenbaker stated that he would like to see these expanded (Canada, 1960: 11). He also announced his pleasure with the fact that nine provinces had joined the hospital insurance scheme and that Quebec was about to do the same (Canada, 1960: 12). The federal government ended its presentation by recognizing that its cost-shared spending was still creating problems for the provinces due to the perception that it intruded into exclusive areas of provincial jurisdiction. It was proposed that the bounds of "how far one government should go in financing the activities of another government" be discussed at the meeting (Canada, 1960: 13).

Lesage opened his ambitious address with words on the subject of provincial sovereignty that could have easily come from Maurice Duplessis.

> [Trans.] Our attitude to federal-provincial relations, as to other matters, has been clearly worked out and is well understood in our province. It is firmly based on the constitutional foundations of this country. That is the only way in which we can draw full strength from the diversity of the roots .... Constitutionally, the eleven governments at this conference have defined responsibilities in the exercise of which each one is sovereign. As Governments, we have duties to our people; and, because we have these duties, we have rights which we must exercise. In particular, since this conference is concerned especially with fiscal matters, we have the rights of taxation. The proper exercise of those rights is essential to the fulfilment of our various responsibilities (Canada, 1960: 25).

Having established his autonomist position, Lesage then made it clear that his use of provincial autonomy would be far different than that of Duplessis. He planned to use exclusive provincial powers to expand the state and this would necessitate a move away from Duplessis' isolationist stance.

> [Trans.] We wish not only to preserve ... [our constitutional] rights but we desire to use them fully to promote the welfare of our own population in all matters under provincial jurisdiction. However, we have no intention of keeping ourselves in isolation, which would be both unrealistic for any province and harmful to the whole country .... Provincial sovereignty must not be a negative concept incompatible with progress; it must be a truly living reality, a principle that is put in concrete form in institutions and by legislative measures destined to promote the welfare ... of the people. In short, sovereignty which is not positive and is confined only to opposition, cannot endure..... [T]he government of Quebec intends to exercise its full sovereignty in the fields which are in its jurisdiction while recognizing the fact that all governments in our country are inescapably interdependent (Canada, 1960: 125-126).

Referring to the agenda, Lesage added a broad topic that he wished to have addressed at the meeting - namely, constitutional reform. He had two specific goals in this area. First, he believed that there should be a declaration of human rights added to the Constitution. To do this he suggested that Ottawa, and each provincial government, should draft human rights bills in their own spheres and then meet to work out a joint declaration on the matter (Canada, 1960: 127). And second, he insisted that the Canadian Constitution must be patriated and that all necessary reforms that might be needed in order to accomplish this goal should be attempted (Canada, 1960: 127). On the agenda before the conference, Lesage began his comments on the subject of unemployment. According to Lesage, Quebec had always "recognized that there is a provincial responsibility in this field but ... [it has] never claimed that it is an exclusive responsibility" (Canada, 1960: 128). Consequently, Quebec was prepared to work with the federal government in every way possible to improve assistance to the unemployed (Canada, 1960: 128). With reference to the question of municipal government financing, Quebec called on the federal government

to allow for both the provinces and the municipalities to have access to the Bank of Canada for borrowing purposes (Canada,1960: 129).

The remainder of Lesage's speech was consumed with the topic of federal-provincial fiscal relations. As Alberta had advocated at the previous meeting, Quebec was of the opinion that cost-shared programmes should be terminated and that the federal money being spent on them should be handed over unconditionally to the provinces. This would allow the provinces to be free of federal government interference in their exclusive areas of juridiction and allow for the creation of programmes more suitable to local conditions (Canada, 1960: 130). Ideally (and again, like Alberta had proposed earlier), Quebec suggested that the provinces should obtain these otherwise conditional funds independently through additional federal government abatements in the three standard tax fields (Canada, 1960: 130). Until a satisfactory arrangement could be worked out however, Quebec believed that it should accept the full range of conditional grants being offered by Ottawa, seeing as Quebec's citizens were paying federal taxes. This would essentially amount to accepting two additional cost-shared programmes beyond the many that Quebec was already participating in - namely, highway construction and hospital insurance (Smiley, 1963: 14). In Lesage's words, until the federal government abandoned its conditional programmes,

> [Trans.] ... the government of Quebec finds itself confronted with a fait accompli. At the present time the citizens of Quebec contribute through their federal taxes to the financing of many joint programmes applied in the rest of the country without deriving any benefit from these programmes. The taxpayer of Quebec cannot be expected to allow such an unfair situation to continue. Therefore, the province of Quebec is taking the necessary steps to accept, on a temporary basis, and without prejudice to its full sovereignty, all conditional grants that it is not now receiving but which are made to other provinces by the Federal government (Canada, 1960: 129)

Regarding the issue of equalization payments Quebec agreed with the federal government that they were an indispensable element of the federation's financial operations (Canada, 1960: 131). On the subject of the the upcoming federal-provincial tax agreement Quebec argued that the federal government should withdraw completely from the field of succession duties, and that the rates of taxation reserved for the provinces in the fields of personal income and corporation taxes should be raised to twenty-five per cent (Canada, 1960: 133). Quebec, for all intents and purposes, was acting as a full player in the tax agreement negotiations. Obviously, with its own tax collecting machinery, Quebec would not need to formally sign a future tax rental agreement with the federal government. The amount of money that it could collect from its three standard tax fields, however, depended on how much the federal government vacated those sources of revenue in the tax agreements. Whether the provinces would receive money through rental payments from Ottawa, or through their own collection machinery, the increased levels at which the federal government would vacate tax fields would create greater provincial financial independence for all provinces.

Alberta held similar positions to those of Quebec. The practice of equalization was held to be a crucial part of government financing in Canada (Canada, 1960: 89).

Cost-shared programmes, however, needed to be done away with. Two arguments were made for their abolition. These arguments were the same as Quebec's. First, conditional payments allowed for federal policy influence in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction; and second, full provincial control of these funds would allow for the creation of programmes that would be more suitable to local conditions (Canada, 1960: 90-91). With regard to tax rental payments in the upcoming federal-provincial agreement, Alberta argued that they should be increased. Like Quebec, Alberta called for the federal government to increase the percentage of taxation space that would be reserved for the provinces in the three standard fields (Canada, 1960: 91-92). As Alberta had argued on several occassions prior to this meeting, the ideal method for tax collection would be a joint federal-provincial endeavour under which all governments would obtain their revenues based on their independent jurisdictional needs (Canada, 1960: 92). And finally, Alberta commented on municipal government financing. Like Quebec, it insisted that municipal governments be given better access to the Bank of Canada for financing (Canada, 1960: 94). The conference adjourned into a closed session meeting after public remarks were completed, and over the following two years a complicated tax agreement was arranged for the period of 1962-1967.

To summarize, as had been the case at all previous meetings focussing on intergovernmental fiscal relations, Alberta and Quebec maintained common interests. Both governments argued strongly for increased legislative autonomy from Ottawa, whether their comments were focussed upon the topic of federal spending on cost-shared programmes, or upon the issue of taxation rights.

With reference to federal spending on cost-shared social programmes and public investment, both Alberta and Quebec continued to argue for its abolition. Again, being forced to either accept or reject these revenues based on Ottawa's conditions for their expenditure was deemed to transfer significant power over provincial decision making to the federal Parliament. The new Quebec Liberal government of Jean Lesage, however, behaved differently than its Union Nationale predecessors. Lesage opted to accept all conditional funding programmes that were being offered to the other provinces. This new approach by Lesage did not seem to arise out of a less passionate commitment to provincial fiscal independence than Duplessis. His statements at the conference clearly demonstrated an adamant desire for a more sovereign Quebec in the federal structure. Unlike Duplessis however, Lesage was an open interventionist. As such, Lesage required all remaining conditional funds in order to modernize the provincial state (Chapman, 1960: 21-23). Some argue that Lesage was in fact much more commited to the ideal of provincial automomy than was Duplessis, based on his penchant to wrestle control of the Quebec economy away from the hands of English-Canadian and American private capital (MacLennan, 1961: 33).

It will be recalled that previously, Duplessis had refused to accept federal revenues for a small number of programmes, whereas Alberta had accepted all of them with resentment. It was argued at that point that Duplessis' stance could be interpreted as a more passionate protest than Alberta's against conditional funding. However, this tendency to credit Duplessis with greater intensity must be tempered by Lesage's actions at this meeting. Duplessis can only be deemed to be more intense than Alberta in his commitment to shelter provincial jurisdiction from Ottawa if one is willing to concede that Lesage was less intense than Duplessis as well. As is

argued above, however, it proves difficult to insist that Lesage was less ambitious than Duplessis in protecting provincial political power.

In any event, and as was the case with the tax agreements, if varying intensity temporarily existed between Alberta and Quebec on the federal conditional spending matter, it did not create conflict between the substance of each government's ultimate objective - to eliminate federal conditional spending altogether.

Conclusion

Consistent with the pattern of behaviour uncovered in the preceding chapter, the governments of Alberta and Quebec continued to exhibit similar jurisdictional interests between the years 1946 and 1960. Apart from the single conference on constitutional reform in 1950, all meetings consisted of debate on federal-provincial fiscal relations, which included discussion on tax arrangements and federal government conditional spending on social programmes and economic development. During this time frame both governments continued their efforts to secure provincial legislative capacities from federal interference. Ultimately, their most overriding ambition was to establish a greater degree of financial autonomy from Ottawa.

While particular policies on jurisdictional concerns differed, the objectives of those policies were the same. Regarding the matter of taxation, there appeared at first glance to be grounds for questioning whether Quebec and Alberta shared similar ambitions. After all, Alberta entered into all federal-provincial tax agreements whereas Quebec did not. According to conventional wisdom, participating in these schemes was equated to succumbing to the centralist interests of English Canada. This general measure of political ambition however, obscured the essential characteristics of the Alberta position - characteristics which placed Alberta's ambitions in greater harmony with Quebec than with Ottawa. Essentially, both demonstrated a desire to secure fiscal autonomy from Ottawa and neither sacrificed that principle by way of there decision to join the tax agreements or not. Quebec's refusal to participate in the schemes seems best understood in symbolic terms only - as a more passionate expression of both governments' displeasure with possessing limited financial capacities.

With reference to federal conditional spending, both governments expressed their opposition to this practice. Each argued for increased financial means to provide their social and economic development responsibilities independently of Ottawa. Alberta certainly did not call for an expansion of conditional funding as conventional academic accounts argue. Again, however, the intensity of Quebec's displeasure over this matter may have been greater than Alberta's. Two Quebec policies stand out in this regard. First, Quebec was the only province to choose the opting-out provisions offered in the federal government's university funding programme in 1959. While Quebec did not gain new powers or more revenue than the other provinces, it insisted on acquiring federal university funds through its own tax collection machinery. And second, by refusing to accept university grants (before 1959) and highway construction (prior to 1960), Quebec, unlike Alberta, had sheltered its corresponding legislative powers from federal influence. However, the tendency to credit Duplessis with more intensity on the conditional funding issue must be tempered by two considerations. First, while much was made about Duplessis' rejection of cost-shared programmes, he in fact accepted all but two of

them. Therefore, he had exposed his legislative capacities to federal conditional spending more often than not. And second, one must consider the example of Jean Lesage's actions in 1960. Lesage, who exhibited an overriding commitment to provincial autonomy, chose to accept all existing conditional cost-shared programmes.

And finally, with reference to the constitutional conference of 1950, both Alberta and Quebec raised literally identical concerns with the federal government's amendment to the BNA Act in 1949, and with the proposition of developing an amending formula. Each argued for restrictions to the federal amendment, as well as for an entrenchment of an amending procedure that would employ the provincial unanimity principle to a maximum extent. Additionally, both Alberta and Quebec argued for a wider discussion of constitutional reform than either the federal government or the other provinces were prepared to consider. It was this insistence on such a wide discussion by Alberta and Quebec which essentially scuttled the conference.

Overall, this comparison of Quebec and Alberta's jurisdictional interests between 1946 and 1960 stands in significant contrast to accounts provided by English-speaking scholars. Alberta did not acquiesce to the principle of centralization. The substance of its jurisdictional positions was the same as Quebec's - namely, to secure, and expand, its legal prerogatives.

Notes

1 It should be remembered, however, that in 1945, Quebec gave its tentative approval to the tax rental concept based on the fact that it was a non-permanent lending of powers to Ottawa which in no way jeopardized its ultimate control over provincial taxing privileges.

2 Stevenson mistakenly adds hospital insurance to this list. While Duplessis suggested that Quebec would not accept federal conditional grants for this programme when the scheme was in the planning stage, Lesage reversed this stance at the 1960 meeting soon after the programme was formally offered to the provinces.

3 Using figures supplied by the Canadian Tax Foundation it is not possible to determine exactly how much these two programmes amounted to as a percentage of the total conditional revenues accepted by Quebec. While McRoberts (1988: 123) writes that Quebec's decision not to participate in these programmes cost the Quebec government eighty-two million dollars in 1959-1960, he does not provide an estimate of how much money the Quebec Treasury received through its participation in the remaining cost-shared initiatives. Additionally, it is difficult to ascertain how McRoberts arrives at the figure he does provide. The Canadian Tax Foundation's publications do not provide a breakdown of the conditional revenues received by individual provinces, nor do they list exactly how much each province spent on highways or universities (which would be necessary given that the amount of revenues transferred to the provinces for these programmes would depend on how much the provinces spent themselves in these areas). The Foundation provides only a very rough idea of how much these programmes amounted to as a percentage of the total conditional funds that Ottawa transfered to the provinces. In a study conducted by Donald Smiley for the Canadian Tax Foundation, conditional grants to the provinces in 1959 are listed under eleven general headings - those being: Recreation and Culture, Hospital Insurance, Health, Welfare, Education, Transportation, Agriculture, Natural Resources, Civil Defence, Municipal Water, and "other" (1963: 16). Within each catagory numerous programmes existed. While no specific breakdown of revenues for each programme was provided, a listing of revenues allocated by Ottawa to each of the eleven catagories is outlined. Education and Transportation - under which university and highway construction grants would have fallen - constituted only twenty-six per cent of the total amount of conditional revenues transfered to the provinces that year.

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4. Explaining Conventional Wisdom's Error: Nation-building as Academic Bias

Introduction

This comparison of Alberta and Quebec's jurisdictional interests, as expressed at Dominion-provincial conferences between 1930 and 1960, produces an account of government behaviour in Canada which stands in contrast to what has been reported by anglophone academics. Essentially, conventional wisdom has misrepresented the reality of Alberta and Quebec's political conduct on two related fronts. First, a central feature of the traditional account - namely, that there existed a tendency among all English-speaking provincial governments to follow the political lead of Ottawa - is missing. On jurisdictional issues in particular, Alberta did not view the goals of the federal government as compatible with its own. Rather, in the face of federal government attempts to amass powers at the centre, Alberta sought to protect and expand its provincial prerogatives. Second, an all encompassing conflict between the nine English-speaking provinces and Quebec over the extent to which these authorities viewed their interests as best served by Ottawa, did not exist. Maintaining provincial jurisdictional competence against the advances of the central government was an ambition Quebec shared with Alberta.

These discoveries beg the following question: What explains the failure of English Canadian political scientists to report the type of provincial government behaviour uncovered above? More precisely, what explains their failure to report the similarities between Alberta and Quebec's jurisdictional interests? As mentioned in Chapter One, the content of the literature indicates that academics studying this era paid scant attention to English-speaking provincial government political interests and practices. Focus was primarily limited to the behaviour of the federal government and Quebec. This alone makes for an interesting topic of study. But the fact that what little the academic community did report was a misrepresentation of those interests adds a further dimension to account for in this inquiry.

Four hypotheses immediately come to mind which might explain the error on record: the information that I have uncovered was not readily accessible at the time events occurred; the small size of the academic community narrowed the scope of subject matter that could be pursued; the actual impact of the provinces on the governing of Canada was minimal; or academics imported a political bias to their work which militated against reporting the type of provincial government conduct discovered above. Of these four hypotheses, I argue that only the last is capable of explaining why the study of English-speaking provinces was neglected, and how (given this neglect)scholars could report that a consensus existed among these provinces to accept federal government dominance. Consequently, it is this potential explanation that I investigate in this chapter.

First, one might surmise that information on provincial government positions during the 1930-1960 period may have been difficult for political scientists to access at that time. Such a problem is common to academe. Since there is often a gap in time between the moment at which events occur and the release of detailed government records on those events, scholars are often placed in the position of having to wait for long periods in order to fully account for history. A case in point is Struther's study (1983) of the development of Canada's national unemployment

insurance scheme. By eventually getting access to the Bennett and King Papers, he was able to demonstrate that, contrary to what was assumed at the time of the programme's implementation, the need for unemployment insurance was only begrudgingly accepted by the federal government and, rather than wanting to provide a minimum income for Canadians, Ottawa intended to use the programme to reinforce the poor-law tradition. This same consideration with regard to the availability of information, however, cannot be given to academics in the case at hand. The information that I gathered for the purposes of this paper was readily available to scholars at the time events occurred. The proceedings of all Dominion-provincial conferences were published no more than twelve months after each meeting had passed.

Second, due to the small size of the political science community prior to the 1960s, perhaps there were simply not enough academic resources available to cover all facets of Canadian politics. As J.A. Corry notes, when he first joined the politics department at Queen's University in the early 1930s there were only four or five trained academics in Canada to teach in this field (1981: 74). By the early 1950s that number had only increased to approximately thirty (Cairns, 1974: 333). While this fact may have indeed limited the scope of what could be studied in Canadian politics it does not inherently explain why academic attention was clustered around the federal and Quebec governments in particular; or why one would assume that a consensus existed among anglophone provinces on the matter of federal political dominance. Limited resources or not, basic instruction on the subject of Canadian politics surely necessitated that attention be given to the dynamics of the federal system of government, and the <u>two</u> levels of authority so essential to its character.[1] Another explanation must be sought which would account for why the conduct of provincial governments was neglected.

Third, perhaps the behaviour of provinces was simply not important to how the Canadian political system functioned at the time. However essential two levels of government were to the make-up of the federal system, maybe the provinces did little to determine how the Canadian polity was governed. Evidence presented above proves that this was not the case. The actions of provincial governments had a significant impact on the fate of the Rowell-Sirois Report, the outcome of Reconstruction, and the development of the complicated post-war taxation system.

Lastly, it is conceivable that the generation of academics writing on the subject of Canadian politics during this era were pursuing a political agenda that led to a disproportionate amount of attention to federal government activity and a subsequent neglect of provincial government behaviour and interests. Indications of such a political agenda appear in the literature. Predominant political scientists were doing more than simply describing an English-speaking provincial government propensity to accept federal government jurisdictional dominance; they were also prescribing such a phenomenon. Moral judgement was passed on the merits of a strong federal government and on the undesireability of provincial actions that might threaten that strength.

Corry, for instance, while describing an English-speaking provincial government propensity to follow Ottawa's political lead, also argued that any province claiming a right to significant legislative powers was "self-centred" (1958: 106). F.R. Scott's work in the 1930s followed a similar style. Like Corry (1941: 158-159), he claimed a decline in provincial powers in Canada was inevitable. This decline was not merely described however, it was also declared to

be a positive development given what he saw as a provincial government inability to manage capital "in the public interest" (1938: 81). John Porter's work serves as another example of prescriptive analysis. According to Porter, apart from Quebec, any potential argument in support of provincial rights was simply "hallowed nonsense" (1965: 382). Such a non-class matter interfered with the establishment of the "creative politics" he endorsed - politics that aimed at changing social structures and which were only achievable from the centre (1965: 369). Smiley added the assertion that Canadian nationalism was best expressed through the central government and, that inequalities of condition caused by provincial government action within their jurisdictions represented a threat to this nationalism "rather than an acceptable exercise of provincial ... or local discretion (1965: 89).

Unlike the other three hypotheses considered, the presence of an affinity to central government predominance might explain why there was not more random attention paid to the activity of anglophone provincial governments and, consequently, why similarity between the jurisdictional interests of Alberta and Quebec was not documented. It could also stand to account for how, after failing to investigate the conduct of English-speaking provinces in their writings, political scientists could simply conclude that this group of governments was bent on maintaining the integrity of the central authority. Such an assertion would be congruent with their preferred outcome.

To investigate this last proposition, a study of the biographies and memoirs of predominant scholars who wrote extensively on the Canadian political environment prior to 1960 would prove useful. In such an exercise one could discover whether these academics either personally acknowledge, or are cited as, having brought a bias to their work that favoured the distorted findings they arrived at. I have chosen to focus upon three such scholars - J.A. Corry, Frank Scott, and Donald Smiley. These three figures wrote extensively on the 1930-1960 Canadian political landscape. Prior to this, however, a brief background to the current debate in the social sciences on the ideal role of the intellectual would be helpful.

The Inevitability of Bias in Academe

An ongoing search exists within academe, particularly in the social sciences (Knopflemacher, 1968: 5), for the ideal role of the intellectual in society. At first glance, there appear to be two opposing views on this subject - those being, the intellectual as an objective observer versus the academic as an engaged moral critic (Knopflemacher, 1968: 4). The fact that such a debate occurs in the first place acknowledges that biases are apparent in the works of social scientists. This point is widely accepted (Brooks and Gagnon, 1988: 12 and Gagnon, 1987: 5). In essence, debate on this topic concedes that biases are unavoidable. Human beings will inherently bring values to what they do. However, these values do not develop in a vacuum and should be understood within the context of the historical environment within which the academic resides. As Konrad and Szelenyi (1979: 11) comment: "The intelligentsia does not just represent transcendence; in reality it reflects a conflict between the transcendent and the historically determined." This is an important point to keep in mind when assessing the works of Corry, Scott and Smiley. Several significant historical events in their lives played a large role in developing their political outlooks.

Therefore, what initially appears to be a debate between academic objectivism and engagement is really an argument as to how much one should sacrifice her or his objectivity to inevitable political bias (Brooks and Gagnon: 1988: 14-15). While the liberal school of thought, for instance, attempts to strike a balance between the two, Marxists will argue that there is in fact no difference between them. Both activities are political in nature. Objectivity is held to be a guise for supporting the status quo which in itself is a political act. This leaves the academic with no choice but to be fully consumed by bias. Complete political engagement to the Marxist is both a matter of fact and, the ideal role of the academic (Brooks and Gagnon, 1988: 12-16).

Overall, it is agreed that the more an academic becomes politically engaged in what she or he does, the less able this person is to objectively criticize, and fully understand, the political landscape (Knopflemacher, 1968: 52-55). While, apart from a Marxist frame of thought, it may be difficult to judge the degree to which scholars may be politically engaged in what they do (i.e. I had to assess the biographies and memoirs of Corry, Scott, and Smiley in order to discover to what extent they imported biases to their work), the lesson arising out of the literature written on this topic seems to be that students of the social sciences must be aware that personal values will be an essential part of the academic literature they will read. Faith in the idea of academic objectivity is ill-advised.

The Academic Lives of Corry, Scott, and Smiley: Nation-Building as Political Bias

In advance of presenting the information written on Corry, Scott, and Smiley, it is interesting to note that political bias in favour of an omnipotent federal state was common within the social sciences community of this era. As Doug Owram (1986) reveals in an extensive study covering the first half of this century, the anglophone social sciences community was morally attached to the principle of a centralized federation. In pursuit of this objective, its members prescribed their feelings in the teaching they performed, became engaged directly in federal politics, or worked in advisory capacities to the federal state.

In the 1920s, English Canadian social scientists began to take note of the growing complexity of the industrial economy in Canada. In order to manage its efficiency, academics prescribed that the state should enlarge its activities (Owram, 1986: x). The onset of the Depression not only reinforced this belief, it also added a sense of urgency to it. What was formerly an observation was transformed into an ongoing political goal (Owram, 1986: xiii, 160-161). Central to this urgency was the observation that undemocratic forms of government had arisen around the globe as a result of the social and economic turmoil caused by the Depression. This impressed upon the intelligentsia that the security of the democratic form of government was inherently tied to the success of industrialism (Owram, 1986: 162-163). Consequently, the prescription advanced for the nature of state action was a combination of direct government manipulation of the economy to eliminate the boom and bust cycles, and the provision of social welfare programmes to sustain a minimum standard of living for Canadians. The scope of the Depression also led intellectuals to assert that the focus of state action should be at Ottawa. In the words of Owram, scholars believed that, "the Depression was manifestly not manageable at the local level. It was a national and international phenomenon that demanded a broad range of action over the widest possible area"

(1986: 223). As a result, "the perspective of the intellectual community accordingly became more national in orientation" (Owram, 1986: 223).

Alongside the need for state-centred social and economic reform was an acute concern with the lack of a strong Canadian sense of nationalism. According to Owram (1986: 221-222), while the cause of nationalism had been present among academics for quite some time, it had only been loosely connected to the idea of social and economic reform prior to the 1930s. From this point forward, however, nationalism was seen as an essential prerequisite to effective social and economic intervention by the federal government. Most importantly, it was seen as a political force that could pressure the provinces into relinquishing their significant jurisdiction over these policy areas to Ottawa (Owram, 1986: 221).

A general opinion existed among academics that provincial administrations were inherently regressive and that "in rhetoric and policy they challenged Dominion supremacy and the technocratic reform that was so important to the intellectual community" (Owram, 1986: 222). According to Owram, "William Aberhart's Social credit government ... provided an obvious target for critics of provincial governments .... [T]his party with no national context represented, to many intellectuals, a vigorous and reactionary regionalism that offended many of their basic values" (1986: 222). The Taschereau and Duplessis regimes in Quebec and the Hepburn administration in Ontario were also used to substantiate the claim that provinces were inherently regressive (Owram, 1986: 222). In more general terms, "Provincial administration ... was characterized by a tendency toward long periods of bad government alternating with relatively brief periods of competence. The exception was Quebec, which was privileged to have bad government all the time" (Owram, 1986: 222). This application of a "reactionary" label to the provinces, however, should not be confused with a recognition of provincial government jurisdictional interests. While the latter inherently speaks against aggrandizement of central government powers, the former does not. Reactionary tendencies alone only indicate a difference with the federal government as to how political powers might be used.

The belief in the inherent progressiveness of the central government and the regressiveness of the provinces, however, seems to ignore the fact that Ottawa had itself done little to relieve the social and economic agonies of the Depression (Struthers, 1983). In fact, to use Alberta's Aberhart administration as the prime example of an impediment to progressive state intervention is to overlook its aggressive attempts in the face of federal government inaction to relieve the burdens of the Depression through provincial government manipulation of its economy (Finkel, 1989: 33-39). In this case it was Ottawa, through its use of the power of disallowance, that stood in the way of state intervention. As well, the example of the Saskatchewan CCF administration was apparently disregarded or overlooked.

The basic objectives and opinions listed above amounted to a true consensus among the larger part of the social science community. While many became actively involved in the three major political parties at the time, the strength and wide-spread nature of this consensus transcended party circles. In the words of Owram,

> Though the 1930's were a time of political polarization and though the intellectual community often seemed to mirror this sense of division in its debates, there was a sense of common purpose that bound the elite

> together. Though personal ties abounded, they would not have survived nearly as well had their [sic] not been something more: the sense of educational superiority and common ideological threads that survived all the anguish and partisanship of the decade. This thread linked the elite all the way from members of the LSR through Liberals ... and [Conservatives] (1986: 170).

According to Owram, this consensus was so entrenched that "those who took a different perspective found themselves almost alone among academics" (1986: 225). A case in point is the experience of Harold Innis. In Carl Berger's account of the life and works of Innis (1986: 85-111), he reveals the type of ostracism that an academic outside of the consensus experienced. Innis was shunned for two reasons. First he vehemently opposed the political engagement that academics were practicing. Such engagement was a serious threat to the intellectual capacity for objectivity that he believed was essential to his profession (Berger, 1986: 101). And second, his writings did not strengthen the sacred cause of national unity. According to Berger, Innis' first substantial work on the fur trade was subject to critical acclaim among his collegues for demonstrating that Canada had developed because of its geography not in spite of it. His subsequent works on the staples sector of the economy, however - which discovered the fur trade to be an anomaly and that the regional nature of staples had centrifugal effects on Canadian development (i.e. trade in staples was logically north-south oriented, not east-west) - were all but ignored. In short, these studies were interpreted as somehow advancing the merits of decentralization (1986: 97-99).

The central method for achieving the reforms that the intellectual community sought became constitutional change (Owram, 1986: 226). Accordingly, academics pleaded their centralization case as key participants in, and instigators of, the Rowell-Sirois Commission and the federal Reconstruction plan (Owram, 1986: 237-326). According to Owram, both projects were simply political platforms for the academic centralist agenda and, consequently, their outcomes were decided in advance. In the case of the Rowell-Sirois study, for instance,

> ... much of the public theatre that surrounded these hearings must be discounted .... The report of the Rowell-Sirois Commission was the full-statement of a generation as to what it saw as the proper future of Canadian federalism. Indeed, the results had been conceived even before its appointment .... A royal commission seemed to provide the means by which the public and perhaps even the provincial governments could be brought to the same position as the intellectual community (Owram, 1986: 239-240).

In the case of the Marsh Report, which outlined the federal government's Reconstruction preferences, Owram simply states that its recommendations reflected that "the expert had triumphed in Ottawa" (1986: 317).

With regard to these attempts at constitutional reform, the intellectual community had been well aware that the provinces were opposed to the recommendations that would be put forth (Owram, 1986: 237, 319, 323) and that the eventual failure of these efforts was clearly a result of this opposition. Again, provincial resistance was simply held to be a product of innate reactionary attitudes

at this level of government (Owram, 1986: 323). As Owram points out however, provincial opposition was not necessarily reactionary. In the case of Manitoba, Premier Garson was sympathetic to the idea of Reconstruction and the interventionist state, but he "could not accept any Dominion scheme that threatened his government's own capability to meet what were, after all, demands that the public was directing at the provinces as well as at the federal government. [Paradoxically] the very logic of the positive government acted as a stumbling block to Dominion policies" (Owram, 1986: 324). It no longer seemed appropriate to simply paint provincial opposition to centralization as regressive behaviour. Provincial government jurisdictional interests were being expressed in various ideological voices.

J.A. Corry begins his memoirs by asserting that much of what he has written was spawned by a personal obsession with fostering a sense of English Canadian identity (1981: xiv). It troubled him that, unlike French Canadians, English Canadians possessed no conception of nation. Coinciding with this concern for identity was a commitment to "nation-building," which he considered to be the nurturing of a bi-cultural sense of allegiance to the federal government (1981: 148-149). Not only was this held to be an obligation of his own, he also noted that it had become the adopted role of the English-speaking university environment within which he worked. While an administrator at Queen's University in the 1950's, he noted that "it was congenial to the universities, save perhaps those of Quebec, to think of themselves as a great source for nation-building" (Corry, 1981: 148). Consequently, attention to the provinces, even for the purposes of funding, was neglected by these institutions. While planning a coloquium on post-secondary financing at Queen's University in 1956 for instance, he remembers that "we thoughtfully invited the prime minister of Canada ... to the Conference. We did not think particularly of inviting any provincial premiers, clearly showing that the universities saw themselves as national institutions (those of Quebec not so sure on the point), and as deserving of attention by the federal government" (Corry, 1981: 148).

Two pressing historical experiences shaped his commitment to an Ottawa-centred nation-building approach - namely, global political events surrounding the Second World War, and the Depression. With regard to the events of the War, Corry was concerned with the fact that different forms of government had emerged around the world which threatened the liberal democratic model so dear to him (Corry, 1981: 89-90). To Corry, Canada risked the threat of moving toward an undemocratic regime if it could not foster a sense of country-wide community. Essentially, he held that political unrest, represented by the factional interests within the polity, was the chief threat to Canadian liberal democracy (1981: 91-95). In reference to political parties, for instance, he advises,

> The community must be felt to be vastly more important than any combination of interests .... So a democracy must have a large measure of fellow-feeling, a belief among most of the contending interests that the common interest of the national transcends all private and special concerns ....The ever lurking threat to democracy is faction, the congealing of opposed groups, each wanting its special interests to be advanced at any cost. A strong sense of community is the main bulkwark against the rise and spread of passionate faction (1981: 93).

Once again, Corry's conception of the proper role of the university and of the academics within it appears.

> [The need for a national sense of community] ... is very elementary. It could be explained to any intelligent first-year high school student. Unfortunately, at the time, we had not been explaining it. Not many people had even thought about it. In a country that spans a continent and houses two distinct ways of life (French-speaking and English-speaking) this was - and still is - a dangerous kind of thoughtlessness. We had come to take democracy and liberty for granted, like the rain and the sun (1981: 92).

Related to Corry's concerns with political stability were the effects of the Depression. Economic and social dislocation had put Canadian federalism in "deep peril" (Corry, 1981: 105). There was a need for government action. A great many of the policy areas that the state needed to exercise in order to deal with the social and economic problems rested with the provinces. Consequently, constitutional reform was considered to be in order. Opportunity for this reform came with both the Rowell-Sirois Commission and the federal post-war Reconstruction plan. Corry, along with many other intellectuals, participated in developing the federal government agenda (Corry, 1981: 111-112). On the Rowell-Sirois Commission, Corry was responsible for studying the shared jurisdictions between the provinces and the federal government. In Corry's opinion, "If these matters were to be regulated, they cried for a single authority" (1981: 105). This single authority was, of course, Ottawa. In both the case of the Rowell-Sirois Report and the Reconstruction effort, Corry openly admits that there was a "bias in favour of centralization" among the academic researchers employed (1981: 111). As was the case with Corry, his fellow researchers believed that to augment political powers at the centre the fostering of an English Canadian political identity was essential (1981: 111).

Strong provincial powers, however, stood in the way of the centralization cause. In a more subtle manner than Scott or Smiley, and without any inclination to label provincial governments as simply reactionary in nature, Corry recognized that provincial government conduct in general was incongruent with Ottawa's (and his) nation-building objectives. Given this, provincal ambitions were also morally inferior to the concerns of Ottawa.

> A stronger loyalty was felt to the nation than to any province except Quebec .... We had yearned for Canadian unity .... We had assumed that activity by the national government within its jurisdiction was a concrete expression of Canadian unity, and therefore better than provincial government action (1981: 112).

Essentially, Corry appeared caught in a dilemna - between a recognized reality and his personal conception of what "ought to be." The latter side prevailed in his writings. Evidence of this dilemna appears in his memoirs when commenting on government behaviour in the 1980's. On the one hand, he recognized that, while a recent phenomenon, provincial government refusal to accept the centralist

objectives of Ottawa was a reality (Corry, 1981: 230). He also believed that it was necessary to re-consider his past biases that considered central government aggrandizement as the only approach to nation-building. According to Corry, "even strong centralists are learning now that centralization of power and activity isn't automatically the best arrangement. National feeling isn't necessarily strengthened by all activities of the national government. Sometimes it is the reverse" (1981: 112). At the same time however, Corry chose to assert that "some of these thoughts about the blessings of decentralization are ... romantic day-dreaming "(1981: 230) and that they represent,

> The concentration of politicians, legislatures, and public debate on rival claims of diverse interests [which] keep our attention riveted on matters much more likely to divide us than to draw us together. Relatively little attention is given to broad issues central to the welfare of us all on which majority opinion might be brought to solidify .... Speaking ... in Canadian terms, an unmistakable sign at present is the agitation of the provinces and regions for less centralization in Ottawa and more opportunity to manage their own affairs (1981: 229).

In short, J.A. Corry's biases in favour of a strong central government capable of maintaining stability and fostering a sense of Canadian nationalism seems to have become a political project that coloured his academic work. While privately recognizing a provincial propensity to nurture sub-national interests, his writings distorted this fact in favour of a more congenial picture of how he thought Canadian federalism ought to have been.

Frank Scott's academic life is documented in a biography written by Sandra Djwa (1987). In total, there were three main influences that determined his conception of how Canadian federalism should function. In addition to sharing Corry's preoccupation with national identity and the failure of the economic order in the 1930s (although his treatment of the economic system was far more extensive and critical than Corry's), Scott also involved himself with the issue of civil rights. All three led him to actively promote the merits of an omnipotent federal state and the unworthiness of provincial government activity.

Scott began to develop his opinions on national identity and the capitalist economic order in the late 1920's. With regard to the former, he, like Corry, was concerned with the lack of an English-Canadian identity - a situation which stood in contrast to the nationalism of French Canada (Djwa, 1987: 99). Such a situation threatened Canadian political unity. He seemed to believe that Canadian political harmony partly depended on the English Canadian community developing a national identity. This in turn would lead to a better understanding of French Canadian cultural aspirations (Djwa, 1987: 127). As Djwa describes, Scott "often embraced friends with the 'Y' salute - two arms outstretched - to indicate a united front of the French and English Races" (1987: 127). Influenced by the Fabian socialist philosophy of J.S. Woosdworth and other members of the LSR he also began to question the morality of the capitalist economic order because of the gaps in wealth it perpetuated (Djwa, 1987: 110, 127). Joining the two concerns together, he became convinced that Canada needed a new, Ottawa-centred, social and economic order that would transcend internal cultural differences, and that would be distinctively Canadian (Berger, 1986: 71 and Djwa: 1987: 115, 120, 127). Undocumented of

course, was the presence of cross-cultural harmony between the jurisdictional interests of the provinces such as Quebec and Alberta.

The misery of the Depression both further developed, and intensified, these feelings (Djwa, 1987: 158). The scale of the Depression convinced Scott that extensive state regulation of the capitalist system was necessary in order to tackle the otherwise inevitable social and economic inequalities in that system and, given its pan-Canadian jurisdiction, Ottawa should be the government to take this action (Djwa, 1987: 151, 158). Standing in the way of central government action were the provinces which, apart from balkanizing the country into smaller political areas, were regarded by Scott as inherently reactionary (Djwa, 1987: 151). Scott used the Quebec government to support this claim. To him, Quebec had not exhibited any tendency toward constructive action during the Depression (Djwa, 1987: 167). Again, like many of his generation, Scott's belief in the inherent good of centralization seems to have blinded him from the fact that the federal government had done little itself to tackle the economic and social dislocation of the Depression. He seemed to confuse what he wanted the federal government to do with the notion that the federal government was intrinsically prepared to do it. As well, his overriding thesis that provincial governments were inherently reactionary did not consider the nature of the CCF government in Saskatchewan.

Scott's experiences with civil rights abuses in Quebec during the 1930's also furthered his bias against provincial government action. In trying to arrange speeches for visiting Spanish Loyalists in Montreal, he and the Loyalists were constantly subjected to harrassment from the Montreal police. To Scott's anger, hall permits were repeatedly revoked due to what authorities deemed was an intention to spread anti-Catholic propaganda (Djwa, 1987: 169-176). As well, at the insistence of Maurice Duplessis and the Montreal business establishment, the McGill University board of governors dismissed its principal at the time for his support of Scott's actions (Djwa, 1987: 170). Scott also took offence at Duplessis' anti-communist Padlock Law which he deemed to be "a vicious piece of legislation" (Djwa, 1987: 301). Consequently, he took on the case of John Switzman who had been charged under the law, and successfully defended him in the Supreme Court of Canada (Djwa, 1987: 297-303). Additionally, he took on the case of Frank Roncarelli whose business had been shut down under the direct orders of Maurice Duplessis for providing bail to Jehovah's Witnesses (Djwa, 1987: 237). While classifying the Padlock Law as "thought control", the Roncarelli case demonstrated a violation of the freedom of religion (Djwa, 1987: 297). Scott's involvement in these cases, coupled with his prominent membership in the Montreal Civil Liberties Association aroused the personal anger of Maurice Duplessis who put pressure on the McGill University administration to control the political activites of its faculty (Djwa, 1987: 240, 301). As a result of his experiences with civil rights abuses at the hands of the Quebec government Scott adopted the opinion, which he advanced in his teachings, that civil rights must be protected at the federal level (Djwa: 1987: 233). Only a uniform Bill of Rights could protect Canadians against the civil rights abuses that he observed to be occuring across the country at the provincial level (Djwa, 1987: 153, 265).

The vehicle for realizing Scott's preferred vision of federalism became constitutional reform. Ideally, such reform would wrestle powers away from the provinces and entrench a Bill of Rights. Scott became actively involved in the Rowell-Sirois Commission and the Constitutional Conference of 1950. With regard to

the Rowell-Sirois Commission, he advised it through a submission he wrote for the federal CCF to return to what he perceived to be the original purpose of Confederation - that being, the fostering of a "national purpose" through the federal government (Djwa, 1987: 153). He pleaded a case for broader economic powers at the centre to enable the federal government "to maintain stability in the economy and provide for the proper development of natural resources" (Djwa, 1987: 154). Additionally, Scott called for the transfer of jurisdiction over all areas of social policy to Ottawa along with exclusive control of the treaty-making power (Djwa, 1987: 154). While noting provincial fears about his prescribed enhancement of Ottawa's powers, he insisted that only the federal government had both the jurisdiction and propensity to ensure the welfare of Canadians (Djwa, 1987: 234).

Throughout the 1950 Dominion-provincial constitutional negotitations he focussed primarily on the need for a federal Bill of Rights. Scott did not simply see a Bill of Rights as a way to ensure the protection of individual liberties from reactionary provinces. He also envisaged it as a possible way to foster a Canadian nationalism, particularly in Quebec (Djwa, 1987: 233). Scott was both aware of, and sympathetic to, the cultural aspirations of Francophones. He adamantly held that Canada was a country of two founding cultures (Djwa, 1987: 235). To resolve an internal conflict he had between his sympathy to the protection of Quebec's Francophone culture and his commitment to a strong federal state, he distinguished between provincial rights and minority rights. Minority French rights protection at the federal level in a charter would remove Francophone allegiances from the reactionary Quebec state and redirect them toward Ottawa (Djwa, 1987: 233).

During the negotiations Scott became an advisor to the CCF government of Saskatchewan. In this capacity Scott experienced an important disagreement with Premier Douglas. As mentioned, Scott believed that the most pressing issue was the requirement of a Bill of Rights to control "the provinces, where the greatest [civil liberties] abuses were taking place" (Djwa, 1987: 265). Whereas all other provinces stood opposed to such a proposal on the grounds that it would restrict their sovereignty, Saskatchewan stood in favour of it. Consequently, Scott sought the help of Saskatchewan to convince the other provinces to consent to a charter (Djwa, 1987: 265). Since most provinces were seeking an abolition of the federal power of disallowance, Scott advised the Douglas government to withhold its support for such a goal until the provinces consented to a Bill of Rights. In a letter to Douglas, Scott wrote,

> ... that no attempt should be made to remove the Federal power of disallowance of provincial law. This was an integral part of the original concept of Confederation, and it distinguishes the Canadian Constitution from almost all other Federal constitutions .... The Debates on Confederation make it clear that the veto power was to be used to see that no local injustice was done without an appeal to higher authority .... If we have a secure Bill of Rights in the constitution to safeguard people in the provinces against the loss of their liberties perhaps the veto power might be dispensed with, though even then I should be against this; as it is, and considering all the political difficulties the veto is a salutory principle of government. I would not like to see a CCF government sponsor a proposal designed to weaken the authority of the Canadian government (Djwa, 1987: 266).

Douglas however, rejected Scott's suggestion. As Premier of a provincial government that supported the respect of civil liberties he stood in favour of the abolition of federal disallowance (Djwa, 1987: 267). Douglas' executive assistant at the time recalls that "the opinion was expressed [to Scott] that the Constitution sets out limits to the jurisdiction of the provinces, and that within those limits, the powers should be able to be democratically exercised without a power of disallowance in the federal cabinet" (Djwa, 1987: 266). Saskatchewan also took offence to the fact that the power of disallowance did not even require a debate in the House of Commons, and that the federal government had demonstrated a propensity to abuse it (Djwa, 1987: 266). Saskatchewan's position troubled Scott. In a subsequent letter to Eugene Forsey, Scott wrote,

> I am getting worried at the way the Constitutional Conference is going. We are really engaged in rewriting the BNA Act and there is a great danger that concessions will be made to provinces that will change some fundamental concepts in the present law. For instance every province demands the abolition of the power of disallowance, and Ottawa seems willing to entertain the idea (Djwa, 1987: 267).

While, up until this point, Scott recognized that provinces were opposed to the centralization of powers at Ottawa, he had simply put it down to reactionary nuisance. To Scott, it appeared that important government interests existed at the federal level only. In the case of the Saskatchewan government however, he was dealing with a social democratic administration that could not be painted with the reactionary philosophy he applied to others. It was prepared to introduce social legislation and to regulate its economy. Yet, by the same token, it wished to protect its jurisdictional integrity from federal government interference. This would seem to have been a reasonable desire, given Alberta's experiences with disallowance in the 1930s when it attempted to implement interventionist policy. Surely this experience with the Douglas government must have demonstrated to Scott that provincial opposition to Ottawa was more significant than the simple reactionary nuisance he discussed in his writings. The reactionary label continued, however, to allow him to overlook any substantial provincial government interests that could threaten his centralizing goals. As Sandra Djwa notes, Scott was not necessarily interested in studying what the nature of the federation was in the present. Rather, "what he emphasized was the need for a national vision of what Canada ought to be [emphasis original]" (1987: 233).

The development of Donald Smiley's approach to the study of Canadian federalism was different from that of Corry and Scott. While he arrived at the same preference for centralization as the other two writers, the historical influences shaping his outlook were different. In commencing his studies of Canadian federalism in the early 1960s (Simeon, 1989: 410), Smiley would not have been writing directly under the experience of the War or the Depression but, rather, under the influence of the academic generation that had developed through these two events. Consequently, Smiley began his studies from a centralist point of view as opposed to having nurtured one (Simeon, 1989: 414). I would argue that this is an important point insofar as it demonstrates that political bias is not simply a matter which may distort the academic writings of a generation of scholars that originally conceive of them, but they also become compounded, or incorporated into works that follow (I

elaborate upon this point in the Conclusion). Essentially, Smiley brought to his studies a profound concern for national unity and a centralist prescription for solving the country's political ills (Simeon, 1989: 411-414).

Interestingly, Smiley himself openly dealt with the issue of political bias in academe. While he had been advised to differentiate between what "is" and what "ought to be", he believed that such a differentiation had no place in the study of politics (Smiley, 1989: 411). As Smiley stated recently, "For myself ... I am convinced that the heart of politics is the conjuncture, the interface, if you like, between power and justice .... It is the intermingling of fact and value, of the 'is' and the 'ought', of the empirical and the normative, which makes politics the most damnably difficult and ambiguous of enterprises" (Smiley, 1989: 465-466). As a student of Smiley's, Simeon comments,

> Many of us see him the model [sic] of how to conduct scholarly enterprise, infusing empirical analysis with a deep moral sense and with an engagement with the fundamental issues of the day .... He knows that the most powerful scholarship is driven by moral purpose; and that scholarship without purpose is both sterile and fiction. Scholarship is about making moral judgement, and normative themes pervade his work (1989: 409-410).

In essence, Smiley considered himself to be a nation-builder. In Simeon's observation, Smiley believed that there was a "need to nurture and sustain community and much of his work reflects a sometimes agonized search for the bases on which, in an era of politicized and governmentalized diversites, we can construct a viable Canadian community (1989: 410). In the search for such bases, Smiley clearly put his faith in an Ottawa-led decision making structure, and considered provincial government interests as a threat to his goal (Gibbins, 1989: 425). Smiley considered

> the federal government as the primary definer of national collective interests, and as the protector of smaller, weaker regions .... In his earlier writings he strongly attacked those who advocated a decentralizing response to provincial pressures. For example, he criticized a federal proposal to place limits on the federal spending power in 1968. He was critical of the younger generation of scholars who he saw as ... accepting uncritically the idea of Canada as a loose collection of provinces. He dismissed both those who were prepared to accept a substantial special status for Quebec, and who talked about a "special status for all" in a decentralized Canada. Both, he argues, assume that there is no national community, and no national collective purpose to be achieved through the federal government. He was, as he put it, on the side of those who wished to resist the disintegration of the Canadian community, and that clearly meant to stress national values, national commitments, and the integrity of the national government. Only a "new national policy" he argued, ... could roll back the ... threats of ... provincial particularism (Simeon, 1989: 414).

Smiley's solution for combating the growth in provincial decentralist sentiments was to "search for a more effective means to accomodate Canadian diversities within the institutions and practices of the central government" (Simeon, 1989: 413). A legitimate impediment to this goal was the existence of two entrenched cultural communities. In Gibbins' survey of Smiley's works, he asserts that, while Smiley urged against the perpetuation of separate provincial state interests in his pursuit of a national community (1989: 425), he was prepared to accept the validity of two communites - one centred in Quebec and the other existing residually across all other provincial and territorial borders - whose distinct political interests needed accomodation at the centre (1989: 426).

As English-speaking provincial jurisdictional interests became increasingly apparent to Smiley in the 1960s, he became pessimistic about the prospects for national unity which he deemed as essential to the federation's survival. In fact, so convinced was Smiley that the federation was doomed to disintegration, that he twice abandoned the manuscipt of the first edition of Canada in Question (Simeon, 1989: 411). As well, he wrote of the "decline of Canadian nationhood" (Simeon, 1989: 415). Paradoxically, this last point insinuates that he believed a Canadian nation existed in the first place - something that he contradicted simultaneously by arguing that a Canadian nation needed to be created.

In Smiley's later work, however, the pessimism about the potential for the federation's survival dissipated (Simeon, 1989: 416). He recognized that widespread provincial government decentralist interests had not disappeared yet they had not sent the country to political disintegration. The federal system, he observed, had demonstrated an abundant capacity to accommodate their interests and that relative political tranquility had been achieved because of this (Simeon, 1989: 417). For Simeon this is an important point to take note of because it underlines the fact that Smiley's original centralist bias weakened his ability to assess the state of Canadian federalism as it evolved. Simeon's words serve as a powerful conclusion to this review of Smiley's academic propensities:

> ... we pay a price for the engaged quality of our work, and the closeness with which it hews to rapidly evolving public events. We continually get captured by them .... We have little time and energy to step back. All of us concerned with current policy continually risk being out-run or outdated by events, and risk being swayed from our analysis of them. Smiley is no exception (1989: 417).

Conclusion

These intellectuals (congrous with the larger social science community) indeed imported an acute political bias to their studies of the type I suspected. Each was openly consumed with the topic of Canadian political unity and how to further that unity. Ottawa, as the only government centre with jurisdiction over the entire country, was viewed as the appropriate vehicle to foster this unity. Two mutually reinforcing problems stood in the way of this goal. First, more jurisdictional powers were needed at the centre in order that Ottawa could formulate country-wide policies of importance to all Canadians. Many prerogatives over policy areas that were of increasing pertinence to the economic and social well-being of Canadians

rested within provincial jurisdiction. Unity, particularly during the Depression, seemed to hinge on the delivery of such policy by one government. And second, there was a need to develop an English Canadian cultural identity, or nationalism. Such a nationalism would reinforce a preference for political action at the centre and, subsequently, the unity these writers sought. Quebec, however, was recognized as an anomaly within the system. Unlike the English-speaking provinces, academics apparently felt that Quebec's possession of distinct cultural attributes warranted its suspicion of, and opposition to, federal government aggrandizement. Quebec's sense of nation was in fact admired for the reason that such an identity was missing in English Canada. Its allegiances, however, needed to be accommodated in Ottawa for the sake of political unity.

On a personal level, all three of these scholars were acutely aware of the potential for provincialist conduct in English Canada. As well, they recognized that this type of conduct could, and did, interfere with the realization of central government aggrandizement. For this reason they viewed the English-speaking provinces with varying degrees of disdain. However, this disdain did not lead to a study of provincial interests. Instead, since provincial interests were contrary to their own, scholars appeared to consider them unworthy of close scrutiny. Consequently, they failed to notice or document that the jurisdictional interests of Alberta and Quebec were compatible. More than just neglecting a thorough investigation of English-speaking provincial government interests, however, these scholars manufactured the impression that English-speaking provincial authorities and the Quebec government disagreed fundamentally on the extent to which their jurisdictional ambitions were best realized through Ottawa. In effect, the superiority with which the nation-building agenda was viewed carried with it not only a moral obligation to study federal government interests, but also to investigate and highlight conditions which might support the centralist cause. One such condition was the existence of a culturally homogeneous English-speaking community which they believed was a basis upon which allegiances to central government aggrandizement could be developed. Therefore, after failing to document the behaviour and policies of the anglophone provincial governments, scholars were inclined to assert that these authorities accepted federal government objectives. Such an interpretation served to further the logic of their nation-building aims.

Notes

1 Primary focus on the federal government, and a related neglect of the English-speaking provinces, are still apparent in the teaching of political science today. As Bellamy et al. write: "Universities have failed to do much research or provide many courses on the provinces .... As with the writing of history in Canada, political science has had ... a centralist orientation. Incursions into the field of provincial government and politics have not been extensive" (1976: v).

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Conclusion: A Call for Further Attention to Bias in Academe

Between 1930 and 1960, the Quebec and Alberta governments assumed a similar, overriding political ambition - namely, to secure their jurisdictional competence from federal intrusion. Influenced by a political bias in favour of a centralized federation, however, English-speaking scholars failed to investigate and document this phenomenon. More precisely, they searched for and nurtured characteristics in the Canadian political landscape which stood to support their cause, at the expense of those which did not. Consequently, the cultural homogeneity of English Canada - which they deemed could be developed as a political force with natural allegiances to Ottawa - became a preoccupation within their work. Conversely, provincialist behaviour within the English Canadian community was neglected. Its disruption of the moral cause of nation-building rendered it unworthy of detailed examination. Had the dynamics of English-speaking provincialism been fully investigated, grounds for political agreement between Alberta and Quebec would have been uncovered.

In effect, this case study demonstrates the validity of the central argument put forth by those studying the consequences of biases within academe - that being, it impedes the scholar's ability to approach a full account of the political reality around her or him. This problem is not merely a matter to consider when interpreting works of the past. It is ever-present in academe today, and this presence should receive our serious attention. I make this argument for three reasons. First, the tendency to build upon biases of past academic work is practiced. Smiley's comments on pre-1960 government behaviour in Canada provides an example of this phenomenon. He started from a nation-building bias that had been taught to him by Corry and Scott's generation of academics. As well, there are the more contemporary works of Cooper, Elton, and Gibbins to consider. Their accounts of Quebec-Alberta interests cannot be based on recent government records, nor on government records of the past. The only material supporting their claims would appear to be past academic interpretations of this subject matter.

Second, upon discovering the distortion of past political reality, there may be a tendency to assert that the diversity of perspectives competing today in the world of political science prevents such distortions from going unrecognized. In other words, would it not seem reasonable to assume that a bias of one model of government behaviour (such as the social-cultural perspective) would be checked by the competition of another focus of study (such as the institutional framework)? As Cairns (1991: 181-198) warns, however, this attitude overlooks the inevitability that within a group of perspectives an all-encompasing bias may develop between them which excludes other potential forms of analysis.

And third, the usefulness of scholars as experts from which society may draw guidance may be diminished by our lack of attention to biases within academe. The biases advanced when scholars allow themselves to be pulled away "from their academic cloisters ... by the exciting prospect that they might influence the Prince" impedes their ability to arrive at plausible solutions to political crises (Cairns, 1991: 183). After all, how can we prescribe an effective solution to a problem we insist on becoming engaged in, if that very engagement does not enable us to fully account for the political reality within which that problem exists?

Cairns amply demonstrates these three points in an analysis of the conduct of English-speaking political scientists during the events surrounding the Constitution Act, 1982 and the Meech Lake Accord (1991: 181-198). According to Cairns, political scientists immersing themselves in the search for solutions to the constitutional crises of the 1970s and 1980s, used an overarching government-centred form of analysis which prevailed at the time (Cairns, 1991: 184). Comfort with this broad perspective led to the general belief that "institutions were the levers whose manipulation might reduce the tensions that threatened to tear the country apart" (Cairns, 1991: 184). Coupled with the institutional outlook was the overriding belief that provincialism had become the dominant feature of Canadian political life (Cairns, 1991: 194). The crux of the constitutional crisis was held to be a federal government insensitivity to sub-state nationalism in Quebec and aggressive provincialism throughout the rest of the country. Consequently, two solutions seemed possible: either devolve powers to the provinces or reorganize federal institutions at the centre to accommodate provincial government concerns (Cairns, 1991: 194). Alongside this analysis of the problem was the presence of a strongly desired outcome - that being, the preservation of Canadian political unity. In essence, the solution and the goal became inseparable. A threat to one became a threat to the other (Cairns, 1991: 189-192).

The consequences of these traits among English-speaking political scientists left them thoroughly unprepared to deal with both the potential and actual outcomes presented by the crises that followed. As a result of the desire for Canadian unity, Cairns observes that political scientists all but neglected to explore the potential for a "Canada-without-Quebec" scenario (Cairns, 1991: 192-193). This neglect could not simply be explained by the implausibility of such a scenario becoming realized. After all, Quebec was to hold a referendum in 1980 to decide this very matter. Cairns proposes that one must attribute such behaviour of political scientists to the fact that they did not want to consider what they did not wish to happen (much like anglophone provincialism was treated between 1930 and 1960). As Cairns puts it, there was the confused belief in academe that consideration of such a prospect "might ... contribute to its unsought arrival" (1991: 192). After all, the few scholars willing to study this possibility were isolated and marginalized by their peers (Cairns, 1991: 193). By way of example, Cairns cites the experience of the political economist Dan Usher who urged that academics plan for a country without Quebec. "The barrage of criticism that he received clearly indicated that the area was a minefield in which it was better not to tread" (Cairns, 1991: 192). As will be recalled, this sort of marginalization also occured in the case of Harold Innis in the 1930s and 1940s. While he was recognized as a staunch nationalist, the fact that he would consider that Canada was an artificial economic entity was interpreted as active support for political disunity (Berger, 1986: 97-99). This confusion between making an observation on the one hand, and furthering a political agenda on the other, is also made by Gibbins with regard to a work of Cairns. Gibbins (1989: 436) automatically assumed that Cairns' call (1977) for academe to pay more attention to the growing powers of the provincial states in Canada was a political endorsement of a decentralized Canada. Thus he saw fit to consider Cairns' simple advice to political scientists as a decentralist "vision" for the country. In the case of the Quebec referendum, the academic neglect of the plausible "Canada-without-Quebec" scenerio left Canadian political science unprepared to deal with a separate Quebec had the referendum passed. "Had Canada broken up, to be replaced by a sovereignty-

association link with Quebec or a less harmonious coexistence of two or more independent states, the successor generation would have found little guidance in the pre-referendum literature directed, with few exceptions, to the reform of a country that had ceased to exist" (Cairns, 1991: 194).

As well, by way of accepting government-centred reform as the only conceivable method of overcoming the constitutional logjam, political scientists were ill-prepared to deal with the eventual amendment arrived at in 1982. The citizen-based conception for national unity that was incorporated into the Constitution by way of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was assessed with a "dim view" by political scientists. They had not been the vanguard for such a solution and, consequently, gave only lukewarm approval to the constitutional amendment overall (Cairns, 1991: 196). Essentially, "the tendency of political scientists to see the constitution as an affair of governments, and its chief organizing or structural principle as federalism, deflected their attention from the appearance of new actors in the constitutional game" (Cairns, 1991: 196). As a consequence of this government-centred focus, political scientists simply honed-in on the fact that Quebec had not signed the agreement. Government happiness was viewed as the only possible expression of the Canadian unity they sought.

Such an academic practice was also brought to bear on the Meech Lake Accord, with similar results. The government-centred approach by which the Accord was arrived at explains why the political science community tended to endorse the document. By the same token, it explains why little sympathy was demonstrated toward organized citizen groups which complained of being excluded from considerations (Cairns, 1991: 196). I would hold that in the wake of the Accord's failure we have witnessed an academic community unable to offer solutions to the political crisis that has followed. To a large extent citizen-based opposition to the Accord was a key reason for its defeat. Having finally realized, or accepted, the legitimacy and potency of the citizen-based argument we in political science are scrambling to arrive at a citizen-based solution to the crisis. As both citizens and governments consider mechanisms such as constituent assemblies or referenda to accomodate long-standing complaints with the closed nature of the constitutional process, the political science community is unable to provide well-prepared advice on these matters. Essentially, our institutional bias that we purported to be so essential to realizing the goal of political unity, has in fact seriously jeopardized that goal by way of impeding our ability to explore new and important realities within the Canadian political landscape.

In sum, experts on the subject of political bias in academe have warned of its inevitability and of the above ramifications on our ability to present the reality of the political environment. Yet political scientists in the field of Canadian studies have failed to take sufficient note of these observations. A suspicion of past academic biases, for instance, might have encouraged a survey and comparison of Quebec-Alberta interests (not to mention a comparative study of the behaviour of the remaining provinces) long before this point. Further, our lack of attention to political biases in academe, has enabled them to become built upon, or incorporated into ongoing works. The problem inevitably becomes compounded by the biases of scholars writing in the present. Given the unavoidable presence of political bias in academe, the task before us does not seem to be one of trying to eradicate the phenomenon from our work. Rather, we should actively flesh it out and openly recognize its tendency to distort our accounts of the political landscape. At the very

least, this would prompt a much-needed, ongoing re-examination of the academic literature. As well, attention to academic biases may allow allow the political science community to be better prepared to offer sound advice on both potential and real political problems. Could national unity have been furthered prior to the 1960s if the intellectual community had been willing to accept the legitimacy of provincial government interests? Would our adopted task of creating unity between English- and French-speaking communities have seemed less ominous - and would the academic community have been less inclined to write a slew of pessimistic forecasts on the subject from the 1960s onwards - had prior recognition been given to harmonious cross-cultural interests at the provincial level of government? Could we have avoided the failure of the Meech Lake Accord if we had allowed ourselves to recognize citizen-based concerns and to incorporate them into the national unity quest? If we insist on being politically engaged in order to provide answers to political problems, open recognition of our biases would further, not impede, our usefulness in such an endeavour.

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